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## TRADITION AND OTHER THINGS.

By REMY DE GOURMONT.

"Bouvard penchait vers le neptunisme; Pécuchet, au contraire, était plutonien."—*Flaubert.*

WE must not boast too much of tradition. It is no great merit to place our feet exactly in the tracks which indicate the road; it is a natural tendency. Though it is not very wrong to give way to this tendency, it is better to attempt a new path. Necessarily, it becomes confounded here and there with the old. We must resign ourselves, but without arrogance. The deed is less meritorious than unavoidable.

\* \* \*

Tradition is a great power opposing the originality of writers. That is why the present so strangely resembles the immediate past, which again resembles the preceding past. This subjection, which is always very oppressive, even in epochs of apparent literary innovation, tends to become a real yoke when the fashion is obedience to tradition. Hence the literary eighteenth century, hence the literature of the First Empire.

\* \* \*

There is the continuous tradition and there is the renewed tradition. They must not be confounded. The seventeenth century believed that it was renewing the bond with antiquity. The Romanticists believed that they had rediscovered the Middle Ages. These discontinued traditions are more fertile when the period which is renewed is distant and unknown.

\* \* \*

It seems then that to-day would be a propitious moment for renewing the seventeenth century. It is an illusion. The seventeenth century, with its appearance of distance, is infinitely near us. It has served as a part of our education. It is known even to those who have not frequented it. We still breathe its atmosphere. Everything derived from it would savour of imitation.

\* \* \*

The seventeenth century is relative to the renaissance in the position that we are to romanticism: the seventeenth century does not continue the renaissance, there are erasures, changes in taste; it does take up the renaissance again, but unconsciously and thanklessly. Does it not seem to us that romanticism understood nothing of its own work? We have attempted to refashion it with an unconsciousness comparable to that of the seventeenth century. The works of George Sand and of Alexandre Dumas seem absurd to us; we deny their genius, but we refashion them. We are as incapable of refashioning the novels of Balzac and of Stendhal as

the seventeenth century was of refashioning Montaigne and Rabelais.

\* \* \*

You take literary tradition as far back as the seventeenth century. Why? Is it from ignorance of the past? Do you not know that our great literary centuries were the twelfth and thirteenth, otherwise good judges would not give the "Vie de Saint Alexis" for a tragedy by Racine? Come now, your tradition savours too much of the fools who put it into your head.

\* \* \*

I like the seventeenth century so much that its most furious admirers will never succeed in disgusting me with it. But if I had to pick out a unique book I should take it from the nineteenth century.

\* \* \*

Tradition—I find it everywhere. All the past can be a part of tradition. Why this and not that? Why the laborious mysticism of Bossuet and not the spontaneous irony of Voltaire?

\* \* \*

Tradition is a long chain with alternate rings of gold and lead. You do not accept the whole of tradition? Then tradition is a choice and not a fact. Considered as a fact tradition is merely a mass of contradictory tendencies.

\* \* \*

As soon as we choose we commit an act of arbitrary criticism.

\* \* \*

The true masters of tradition are those who, like Saint-Beuve, have despised nothing, have wished to understand everything.

\* \* \*

Do you believe that anyone who goes back no further than Flaubert and Baudelaire can possess a good literary tradition? I know such men and women, and they astonish me with the delicacy of their taste.

\* \* \*

Tradition is sometimes nothing more than a bibliography, sometimes a library. Brunetière was a bibliography; Saint-Beuve a library.

\* \* \*

"The best French writer of the seventeenth century is Hélienne de Crenne," I was informed by a woman who possessed a somewhat feminist erudition, and who, beside that, was a bibliophile.



People who say to me, "You are in the tradition of Montaigne," amuse me, for I am no great reader of the "Essais"—a fact of which I am almost ashamed. The greater part of the discoveries of professors on the formation and tradition of minds is of this sort. The traditional man cannot see analogous tendencies in two minds without thinking the later comer is an imitator of the earlier. School habits.

\* \* \*

My tradition is not only French; it is European. I cannot deny Shakespeare, Dante, and Byron, who taught me what poetry is; nor Goethe, who enchanted my reason; nor Schopenhauer, who began my philosophic education; I cannot deny Nietzsche, who gave a principle for my repugnance to spiritualist morality; I cannot deny Swift and Cervantes. And yet the two first books which opened the world to my soul were Stendhal's "Amour" and Flaubert's "Madame Bovary," found in a cupboard of the house!

\* \* \*

A curate who taught me Latin during the war, when the schools were shut, revealed Molière to me. I have always been grateful to curates on that account. The remainder of the classics was matter for lessons and impositions. I read them much later in life. Such is my tradition.

\* \* \*

What most strikes me in the young men of to-day is their docility. They learn what is taught them. In my time a professor had no authority. We recognised in him a mission for preparing us for a degree.

\* \* \*

In the second class I took my rhetoric (old style); in rhetoric, my philosophy; in philosophy, verses. I was a boarder.

\* \* \*

My knowledge of French literature came slowly. I preferred foreigners at first. When I was thirty I still knew nothing of the seventeenth century, whose pulpit-smell pursued me down to the day when I handled the old editions.

\* \* \*

This kink in my mind, this scorn of anything taught, has caused me to be behindhand in certain things, in advance in others.

\* \* \*

I have only enjoyed that which does not teach. This plunged me into the Latin of the Middle Ages.

\* \* \*

I have never put foot in the Sorbonne except to look at pictures—Puvis de Chavannes—and, the last time, the frescoes of Mlle. Dufau. It is apparent how much I have been impassioned by the discussions of the teaching at the Sorbonne.

\* \* \*

When I see a hand painted on a wall indicating a direction I instinctively look the opposite way. In the street I always walk against the crowd; I go where nobody goes. The voice crying "Follow the crowd" makes me afraid.

\* \* \*

I have often fought against my natural tendencies, often praised a state which was quite inaccessible to me; and several of my books are merely protests against myself.

\* \* \*

For a long time I have had no aggressive opinions on anything, but, with the débris of my old convictions, interior principles have been formed in me with which I judge even those matters on which I am silent.

\* \* \*

They are neo-classic; that is to say that they wish to be classic immediately, without passing through a flattening mill! Ronsard has been three hundred and fifty years becoming a classic and the Chanson de Roland eight hundred years.

\* \* \*

We are always tempted to imitate what we love, when we do not love enough. Push love as far as admiration; admiration discourages.

The true "classics" of the seventeenth century, the models for all men of taste, are to-day forgotten. They were Patru, Balzac, d'Abancourt. Boileau in his day was a breaker of dishes.

\* \* \*

The punishment of the tribe of professors is that it is eternally destined to despise La Fontaine alive and to venerate him dead. The great classic poet was first of all a kind of Ponchon, who entered life with his hat over one ear and with a girl on each arm. He has the reputation of a Théophile, but la Bruyère, at that time, still hesitated between Théophile and Malherbe.

\* \* \*

The true tradition of the French mind is the liberty of the mind. To discuss all questions anew, to admit none save those which can be resolved *à priori*, only to admit the best reasons and to consider as the best those which contain a principle of independence. To remember that no tradition is worth the tradition of liberty. To be oneself, to disregard those who speak to one in the name of a dogma, but not to be one's own dupe, and not to wish to impose on others that liberty of which the constitution of their brains renders them incapable.

\* \* \*

Preferences! A good word to use in a matter of literary taste or even philosophical. It contains no negation, no dogmatism.

\* \* \*

Yet some negations are necessary; there must also be a little dogmatism. Deny bravely what your taste does not relish. Affirm valiantly what you like. You are, then you are also a tradition.

\* \* \*

And you are more complex than you imagine. However religious you are, be certain you are also slightly Voltairian. However positive you think yourself, you contain in yourself so much mysticism that you would be terrified if you could see everything clearly. Your admiration is for the great classics, but if you were quite sincere you would admit that nothing has so taken you as the beautiful works of romanticism.

\* \* \*

At bottom everything in literature is useless except literary pleasure, but literary pleasure depends upon the quality of sensibility. All discussions die against the wall of personal sensibility, which is flesh on the inside and on the outside is a wall of stone. There is a way to turn it about, but this you do not know.

\* \* \*

We have put art above everything and it must remain there in spite of those who wish to replace it by opinions. I put *Candide* and *René* into my sack. Take away your Voltairian blague and Chateaubriand faith; they have nothing to do with me.

\* \* \*

The French tradition is so vast, so contradictory, that it lends itself to all tastes. A famous poet once told me that his master was Dorat. Why not? I might have liked Dorat myself if I had known him.

\* \* \*

How heavy is the burden of this literary tradition, which goes (let us not pass the fourteenth century) from Emile Deschamps to Verlaine, across Villon, Rabelais, Ronsard, Montaigne, Malherbe, Corneille, Bossuet, Voltaire, Rousseau, Chateaubriand, Hugo, Saint-Beuve, Flaubert, and so many others.

\* \* \*

It is chaos, a bog in the forest. We can no longer see the sky. Cut them! Cut them!

\* \* \*

They have taken beforehand all my words, all my phrases, all my ideas. Oh, these obligatory ancestors! They bind me. They suffocate me. Far from drawing tighter the bonds of tradition we should release the brains which it binds. Bend your branches, great tree,

Flecte ramos, arbor alta.

What we need is less models and more of the free light of life which you hide from us.

(Authorised translation by RICHARD ALDINGTON.)



## VIEWS AND COMMENTS.

THE notion which enables the Saviours of Society to develop their steamiest heads is that of "equality," and to take this notion to pieces is a process after the nature of a cold douche which should do much to reduce the humanitarian temperature to the level of common sense.

\* \* \*

On the face of it the task is difficult because of the elusive element in the enthusiasts' advocacy, for the first comment which they will make after affirming that all men are equal is that they are quite ready to grant you that they are not. But one must have patience with a humanitarian: being a verbalist he must be given ground-room to set up his catch-words, and labels: else what is he? And if with patience you let him run on with his discourse, somewhere approaching the finish he will begin to show what he means as opposed to what he originally has said. Out of the twisted phrases one gathers that what the egalitarians mean is not that "all men are equal," but that they are "equal in the eyes of God," or that they are "equal before the law," or that they ought (blessed word!) to have "equal opportunities," or that they have "a right to equal treatment"; Mr. Bernard Shaw would say that they ought to have equal incomes. There are other turnings of the phrases, "levellings up" and "levellings down," but these already cited will serve.

\* \* \*

Between them there is little in common to serve as a connecting link. Each requires to be taken singly on its individual merit. The most illuminating, if the most vulnerable, is the one that men are "equal before God": and we need not worry to ascertain the meaning of God before seeking to learn why. It is enough to know where we may find him. It is commonly agreed that whatever God's nature, his abode is in the human heart, and that whatever response comes from that intimate quarter will be inflected with the voice of God. Now it is the heart which is the most emphatic in its denial that men are equal: the tricks of verbalism may go as far as they can but when feeling is more than skin-deep it remains unaffected by mere expression of opinion. Individual feeling is not merely aware that one is not equal to another but differs from all the rest: it acquiesces with a sense of satisfaction which is the secret of the hold which every form of genuine sport has upon the best elements of human nature. A desire to test and call into full evidence the amount of disparity between one and another is the motive behind every competition. To maintain a fair field and no favour in order to clinch the matter: to be satisfied to let the best man win in ungrudging recognition of "inequality": these are the best traditions of virile peoples, and furnish the evidence that worth is shown not merely in the possession in a high degree of power, but also in intelligence which is capable of recognising it even at its own expense. If the "eyes of God" have looked with favour on anything it has been upon the sporting instinct of good losers as well as good winners, and these same eyes have been always ready to frown on those who claimed to be equal with all men.

\* \* \*

If in claiming to be equal in the eyes of God, inferiors have presumed on their merits overmuch, in maintaining that we are all "equal before the law," the superiors have presumed overmuch upon our lack of understanding, for it is a catch which could deceive only the excessively stupid. Before the law was, we were—unequal: that is why the law was necessary to perpetuate the inequalities of power and possessions. Consider, for instance, the law prohibiting theft, which is made to prevent those who have little or nothing from attacking those who have much. The poor man has scarcely anything that the rich man would care to own. He has the energy

of his limbs, and the law is so framed that even this comes easily within the rich man's reach. The law is irrelevant as regards the rich who could have no same motive in coming by possessions in the prohibited ways. Should they indulge in them it is, as a matter of fact, regarded as insanity, and "kleptomania" is a recognised feature of "pathological crime." That there are no laws against rent, interest, and profits, or against speculating for profit proves that by instinct the law has kept clear of any attempt to put a term to the obtaining of the lavish rewards which fall to the superiorly "unequal." There is to be no counting of heads and sharing up if the trend of the law is to count for anything. It assumes that initiative is, and is likely to remain, at a premium.

\* \* \*

When the equality argument shifts to claims of "rights to equal opportunity," "rights to receive equal treatment," "equal incomes," it becomes obvious that the assertion about all men being "equal" has in reality been abandoned, and the theory of what we should call the "Other Persons" has been resorted to. It is the shadow of the "Other Persons" which hangs over all these rights to deserts which one's own powers fall short of obtaining. It has its roots in the dependence on the feeding-bottle and apron-strings; it is the refusal of responsibility which seeks for the protection of the fostering parent in the outer world at the age when the fostering of the parent would naturally come to an end. It looks to the world to press opportunity upon it as it aforesaid found the parent pressing the bottle. It is a misapprehension due to a false analogy. Opportunity is not like cake which exists apart from one's ability to eat it. An opportunity only becomes one when it is seized. It is the power which can use it which strikes the hour for the advent of opportunity. Opportunity is the form in which power asserts itself. It is there or not according as power is there. To ask for equal opportunity is to ask to be endowed with the powers of someone else. What can be another's opportunity might not be ours. What shape *our* opportunity will take depends upon what kind of power we have. Whether we have any opportunities or not depends upon whether we have any power or not. If one has power in one's self everything will turn to opportunity; if one has not, the most obviously open avenues will appear blocked as with impassable walls. Power exploits everything which is amenable to it; lack of it means just inability to exploit anything. To have an opportunity means to be able to exploit; i.e., to use what is at hand. To ask to have opportunities provided is to show inability to use an opportunity, as a fretting infant turning from one nourishing food to another will be unable to get benefit from any. A parent may care to protect and arduously keep alight the unhealthy flicker of life, but it is a mistake to imagine that others will do this without demanding a price. What the price is reveals itself in the sequel.

\* \* \*

As for equal treatment. "Treatment" is the retort according to kind. Gunpowder is treated as becomes gunpowder, gossamer as becomes gossamer. People are treated according as they are, i.e., for what they respond to. The egalitarian would have men treated as they imagine some ideal person called "Man," whom they have in mind, should be treated; but as men are unlike this "Man" as cheese is unlike chalk, the treatment is not forthcoming. A person who is a shuffling hanger-on will not be treated as though he were a strong independent self-reliant individual. He will be treated, i.e., used; i.e., exploited for what he is, just as the strong man will be exploited for what he is. He will get as his total income what he appears to be worth to anyone to whom he cares to put the delicate question: to his



employer, for instance. Income is the reverse side of "outgo"; divorced from the latter the former is without meaning, and when Mr. Shaw proposes making the first independent of the second he indulges a grotesque fancy for his own diversion which he could not reasonably expect to have any force with his fellows. For him it has force as a whim, and that—his own: just as arctic exploration has had force with certain explorers. Or rather it would be possible to argue that it had such force with him, did he make a *bonâ fide* attempt to practise it: which unfortunately for the strengthening of one's belief in his genuine convictions regarding this matter, but unfortunately as regards one's belief in his general commonsense he shows no sign of doing. And with the enthusiasm of its arch-prophet at this low heat we feel justified in leaving "equality of incomes."

\* \* \*

However difficult it may be to coax from the egalitarians a coherent statement as to their main position, it is not at all difficult to track the notion of equality in its modern preposterous democratic sense back to its source. The grotesque misconceptions on which modern democratic theory is based are the outcome of a misunderstanding of the forces behind a tiny social experiment upon which sheer accident concentrated the attention of the civilised world. The nature of American political institutions following upon the successful issue of the War of Independence was not fixed under the influence of an underlying intellectual theory. It was the natural adjustment to the fact that the American rebels were what they were—capable farmers—owning and working their own land, bearing and knowing the effective use of arms. There was no large servant class amongst them. They came of a picked stock; self-assertive and powerful; too powerful to brook control—as the history of the early American settlements offers sufficient evidence. If they were not the equals one of another, at least there were none so inferior in native power amongst them as to encourage interference with impunity. It was because they were just what they were that the American constitution fitted their needs. The constitution was an adjustment fitted to free men, *i.e.*, powerful men. The rights which it guaranteed them represented the terms of a bargain which each one could justly contract for. Their rights were a consequence of their individual might.

\* \* \*

The European theorists, however, who were fired by this spectacle of American "free and equal" institutions, failed to grasp the fact that those social arrangements were secondary: wholly relative to the particular conditions in which they took rise. They deluded themselves into imagining that the conditions of free and equal Americans could be introduced *holus bolus* into ancient civilisations of which the foundations were fixed on a basis of slavery, mitigated here and there by local differences; a truly fantastic misconception. From a highly particularised situation they risked an impossible generalisation; from the rights of picked Americans they generalised upon the Rights of Man. How this generalisation has broken down it is now open for all to see—notwithstanding the fact that the "liberty" and "equality" elements of the American experiment have been so exceedingly well lubricated with the "fraternity" element, a foreign element which, at the outset, it became clear would be necessary to make the scheme work at all in the slave states of Europe.

\* \* \*

There is something pathetic—as well as ludicrous—in this wordy attempt of modern democracy, boldly to assert "rights" which they are bankrupt of power to validate, *i.e.*, to justify, *i.e.*, to make good in power as well as in words. Its century and a half of a hearing is a standing monument of the extraordinary hypnotism which words wholly divorced from sense can exercise. Perhaps the delusion owes part of its success to the fact

that the soil in which it settled was so well prepared. The religious notion that there existed an external authority from which all bounties flowed had much to do with the ready belief that rights and powers could be conferred. The paternal version of faith was in keeping with an extension which saw in the State the temporal parent of the people: a parental authority as potent to bestow "freedom" as it was to clap its members in goal. In fact, so superbly has the delusion flourished that far from giving way it has compelled the term "free" to develop a new meaning. In addition to its only efficient meaning of "empowered," it has developed the meaning of "unrestricted"; making the term—in consonance with all democratic thought—relevant to a duty laid upon the "Other Persons" rather than to any change in the personal force in oneself.

\* \* \*

To be "free" in its meaning of "unrestricted" implies dependence upon the exercise of an embargo put upon the forces of the "Other Persons" in the interests of those persons who are to be kept "freed." It sets itself to the removal of obstacles by others to make clear the path of the particularised ones. By virtue of *those* refraining from exercising power when they might, *these* are permitted to be "free." They are "unrestricted," "left free," which being free is a fixed condition, and a permission granted them beyond their powers, by courtesy termed a "right." Thus a status accorded to the down-and-outs by others of a different order is called "being free." This freedom extends exactly the length of the chain of permission. They become "Freed men": a permitted status very redolent of associations with another. And the higher order is very paternal, very protective, very anxious for the good of its protégés as long as this does not interfere too much with its own. Let there be no misunderstanding about the fraternal spirit, the sand upon which the edifice of democracy is built. To recognise it for what it is is not to under-value it. Most of us are very good-natured and fraternal when it comes to the pinch, and when we are in the mood for it can be protective and what not. Only, people cannot have their cake and eat it. They cannot press for the granting of bogus courtesy "rights" and then complain that the respect which goes with genuine ones is not accorded them. They cannot cry out for the protective offices of a state and then cry out that the Government is grandmotherly. People who argue to the effect that the Government of a community made up nine-tenths of servants can be called "free" should be the last people in the world to mention the fact that such a state develops very servile aspects.

It is, indeed, only at the present time that the democratic theorists, though always mistaken, have become genuinely farcical. A protective Government, under which all look after each, which delivers "rights" out of hand so to speak, accords opportunities, finds you work, shelter, food, education, cannot let you run amok: it must look after you. A parent does not let a bottle-fed infant please itself: neither does the democratic state. The cries of the "Servile State" alarmists latterly gathering volume amongst good democrats are the vexed and disgusted comments which the creators have to pass on their creation. They look on their handiwork and see that it is bad: which would be all to the good no doubt were they aware that they are the responsible progenitors. Unfortunately they understand so little what it is in the Servile State which disturbs them that it would be too much to expect them to trace its parentage. When these alarmed democrats understand better the motive of their own outcry, we shall hear less not only of the Servile State but of democracy.

\* \* \*

That the Servile State bogey promises to have a little vogue is due to the fact that skilful use can be made of an ambiguity in the term "servile." The term, when used as implying a detestable quality, means that certain persons elect to make a display of feebleness beyond



what is necessary on account of their incompetence in order to flatter a stronger person with a view to getting more out of him. It is a sort of commerce in lowering of status in order to be accorded a measure of charity, over and above the terms of a bargain. In this connotation, to be servile is to crawl where necessity merely demands a walking circumspectly, to lick the superior's boots when the contract would be filled by merely brushing them: an overfeigning of feebleness to induce the throwing of a bigger bone of charity out of the thankfulness in the superior one's heart, when seeing the crawling object he can exclaim "Thank God I am not as this one." That servility of this sort is despised is just a matter of taste, for it usually turns in the long run to an increase in the servile one's competence. Though he sinks very low he has the reasonable expectation that his plunge will enable him to climb a little higher: that is, if he does not mistake his man and actually receive a sound kicking from the superior one's boot in a burst of repulsion against the figure he cuts. Nine out of ten even of the poorest prefer as a matter of taste not to descend in this particular kind of way, or to take such offensive risks.

\* \* \*

But this meaning of servile is not the actual meaning as used in the phrase Servile State, though it is upon association with it that those who use it rely to make the notion odious. With utter futility, nevertheless, since the Servile State as intended by the alarmists who use it, is merely the description of any community where the great disparity between the power and audacity of certain of its members and those of others is so great as to deter the latter from the exercise of initiative. Wherever this disparity exists there must exist as the outcome of it two classes: one class which feels that it dare take certain risks; break away from the herd and strike out on its own; and another that dare not and therefore cannot. The latter will divide themselves up on terms of wages to serve on the former's schemes. So there obtains on the one hand, initiative, imagination, knowledge of human conditions and wants, and readiness for responsibility; on the other hand, toil, more or less heavy with skill more or less elementary; the two classes being joined together by the bond of wages for services rendered. One requires nothing more than this to postulate of necessity a Servile State, which less flamboyantly labelled would be a Servant-State, since services are paid for in wages; just as when services are paid for in kind it was a Slave-state. For the wage-system is not a cause, it is an effect; indeed, it is misleading to call the working for wages a system at all. A system is a design planned beforehand and laid on a situation, as an irrigation system, or a canal system, or a railroad system is a design laid upon the natural lie of the land or flow of the water. Working for wages is natural in the sense that the rivers of a primitive country are natural, or as the circulatory system of the body. It is bound up with the heights and depths of human ability; the natural differences in endowment of power back to which all changes (*i.e.*, all systems by which it is overlaid), must revert in the long run. It is not to demand its destruction or to assert that its destruction is possible, likely or desirable,—it is only to describe it—to say that the present wage-system is merely an adjustment of the old slave-system, where, on the one hand, the granting of a certain amount of leisure and freedom from surveillance is balanced on the other by a corresponding disregard of the servant's welfare outside the hours of service demanded in the wage contract. Add to this lack of responsibility for the servants' general welfare, the utter divorce made necessary by modern "progress" between men and proximity to any base capable of furnishing an adequate yield of the elementary means of life, and one realises that the amount of initiative which would have been considerable for the needs of the old slave days, is relatively far less adequate faced with the needs of to-day. It proves that the wage-earners have not only failed to exercise initiative on their own account, they have allowed the initiative of their superiors so to plunge ahead as to

make it increasingly difficult for them to become anything more than hired men. That they realise this and seek to decorate the terms of hire, by calling them salary, or pay, is evidence that the present generation at all events sees no prospect of wage-earners showing any such increase in natural power as will urge them to cease to be hirelings and become their own masters.

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Consider the experiment of the letting direct to the workmen the contract for the new Theosophical Buildings. What does it prove? That the men can do the work off their own bat, and assert their power to absorb profits? Not at all. It merely proves that if a wealthy woman has a fad that can be run by money she will be able to give it a run, with exactly the same incentive which moves Sir Thomas Lipton, for instance, to keep on building new yachts. As long as the money holds out one can do as one pleases: pay as good prices as there are in the market, and so on. I do not see how such a scheme can be a failure. There is everything which ordinarily goes to make a job a success. Mrs. Besant supplies the initiative, places the order, dictates the prices (good ones because it amuses her) she is willing and able to pay and the "workers" as usual work on the scheme of someone else. Not only are they working on the lines of other people's purposefulness and initiative: they are backed by the most skilful organiser of sentimental goodwill alive in this sentimental age. One hopes they like it: and like raising their caps and giving My Lady Beneficent three cheers when she graciously goes down to the works to say good-bye to the "dear poor fellows" before her departure to India. It would perhaps be too much to hope that they proceeded to add a pious if silent prayer that she would go to blazes, and felt a rebelling itch against this all too, too gentle touch: perhaps the democratic, paternal influence has gone too far to expect "workers" to be anything other than crosses between lap-dogs and draught-horses in their relationships with employers.

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The experiment itself might very well be compared in one aspect at least with the system of "pay" in the Army. The very good-natured but excessively unobservant work on the wage-system to which we referred at length in our last issue has this remark:

*"Do officers ever dream of wages? Do they say they are going on half-salary? No. They go on half-pay. . . . It is obvious, is it not, that these verbal distinctions disclose substantial material differences."*

Now Mrs. Besant's protégés might very well consider that they were receiving not wages but pay, as they do in the Army. For the difference between the two appears to be that wages are wages when the person who pays them—the initiator from the workman's point of view—in doing so is comparing them with a total computation which he has in his mind which he calls working at a profit, and by which he means that after computing his outlay upon wages and other necessary expenses his income shall present a satisfactory balance. When on the other hand wages are "pay," as, for instance, in the Army and Navy, the Government can go into the business almost regardless of expense: for the simple reason that they have sufficient money to do so. So has Mrs. Besant. Both she and the politicians can afford to be philanthropists—if they choose, and as long as the money lasts: that is as long as Mrs. Besant's popularity lasts, and the State's finances show no immediate sign of tottering. There can, of course, be only a limited number of such philanthropists since the wherewithal must come from somewhere. Mrs. Besant's supporters and the taxpayers to the Government must get their surplus from somewhere before the former can be in a position to do the graceful thing. And "surplus" and philanthropists are inextricably bound together. Not all employers could indulge in Mrs. Besant's hobby: as a matter of fact the Government at present does not propose to. It is not their whim: their good-will at present elects to run into other channels. If only people



understood the arbitrary character of good-will they would save themselves from calculations which can only lead them in pursuit of a social mirage. It is the failure to apprehend its spasmodic nature, and the fleeting and accidental conditions upon which it is based that keeps so many of us spending the best energies of our youth planning mistaken good things for a mythical class called the poor. And making part and parcel with all this miscomprehended goodwill is a sinister meaning which has come to be attached to the term "to exploit," which after all means nothing more diabolical than "to use" or to "bring out possible developments." It is not for those who know how to exploit anything whatsoever to attend to their ways: it is for those who hitherto have known but meagrely how to turn anything to use, to augment *their* power. It is their move: their turn to exploit. Attempted embargos upon other's exploitations will always fail in the long run: for those who know how to exploit know that there are many more ways than one to a desired end. Embargos are negative, empty of positive power. The positive power shows itself in use: in creative activity. To set about exploitation off one's own bat, is that initiative and enterprise on their own that the "workers" need. It is the lack of it which keeps them still in the serving class. It is its possession which makes masters.

\* \* \*

We might here perhaps revert to the question of "moral wrappings" concerning which Mr. Stafford Hatfield raised some interesting considerations in our last issue. Before doing so let us give a report of the progress egoist doctrine is making in the direction of the multitude. If any reader of *THE EGOIST* by chance saw a copy of the "New Statesman" Literary Supplement of June 27th, he must have been led to wonder how long Mr. Bernard Shaw had been a silent convert before breaking silence thus:—

"The highest forms (i.e., of art), like the lowest, are necessarily immoral because the morals of the community are simply its habits, good and bad; and the highest habits, like the lowest, are not attained to by enough people to make them general and therefore moral. Morality, in fact, is only popularity; and popular notions of virtuous conduct will no more keep a nation in the front rank of humanity than popular notions of science and art will keep it in the front rank of culture. Ragtimes are more moral than Beethoven's Symphonies."

What next? We are in danger of becoming popular! It is true that the "New Age" put the last sentence in a column which it calls "current cant," but then is it not in the "New Age" where one may read of the "changeless laws of morality"? However, to Mr. Hatfield. Mr. Hatfield's query in substance is: "What compensating values does the egoist offer to the moralist in exchange for the depreciated values of social authority?" We offer nothing and suggest no such exchange.

\* \* \*

Let us be clear. We do not conceive ourselves as offering egoist-vests in exchange for popular moralists-overcoats. We would not willingly make a convert of one who found comfort in moral wrappings, which wrappings we conceive to be of the nature of skins rather than garments: the outer layers of which drop off only when the new skin is ready grown underneath. Whenever an amoralist argument is addressed to the moralist crowd it is purely in self-defence: its intent is to splinter the fangs of their watch-dogs on the hard bone of derision where they expected to bury them deep into flesh: quite different from its intent when addressed to friends where it is merely for amusement and the pleasure of common understanding. That it is necessary to be able to state one's creed upon occasion to the herd: to be able to oppose a single lightning stroke as a fit reply to innumerable pin-pricks and wasp-bites, the fate of the

author of "Dorian Gray" makes clear. For a dazzling intelligence to suffer itself to be shamed to death by the rabble is a shocking and offensive thing. Yet a brilliantly audacious and adventurous life, only half-self-conscious, and consequently only half-expressed, must of its very nature invite it, and—almost as hard a thing—allow of one's friends perpetuating the unintelligent grounds of attack even after the event. (Here anent a recent trial in the courts bearing somewhat on this issue we might point out that Oscar Wilde spoke with the inaccuracy of impatience when he said that books were neither moral nor immoral. As a matter of fact they tend either one way or the other: one would be sorry to be accused of writing a book with a moral tendency. And by a friend, too!) However, again coming back to the subject, apart from the putting of oneself in such a position that, should the herd presume to issue a challenge, the cost shall be theirs, the amoralist has no message for the moralist. In any case, such a message would not arrive, and for the only valid egoistical reason: that if "true," it would not serve his purpose. It is therefore, for him, not true: the skin is still alive and sticks. And for the rest, what does it matter? The situation is met when the amoralist has succeeded in making the moralist realise that it will be well with him only if he minds his manners.

\* \* \*

Conscience and Mr. Harpur (see correspondence in last issue) must be deferred to a later.

D. M.

#### ARCHITECTURE.

The soul athirst for loveliness shall look  
On symmetries in stone;—pure spires and towers  
Are eloquent to it as flowing curves of flowers,  
Of the large gladness that God meant  
That we should sleep and wrestle in—the plan  
From which on the first morning He made man  
And drew the perfect paths where planets went.  
That soul leaves work one day and high and low  
Seeks through the cumbered town, until somewhere  
It finds a piece of building gravely fair;  
It stands at rest, as if it looked on snow  
And hears the melody to which we grow.

#### TO ONE DEAD.

So you have died—you are not with us here;  
You have taken the last soft step,  
From the deep dissolution, out from the fear;  
You have passed out there, humble, supreme;  
We had guessed at the mystery you had long known,  
We had wept, till you turned, sighed, and made it  
your own,  
Your body lies clear in surrender,  
Resting and ready it gave up its charge,  
The passing was veiled in a splendour  
We but guess at—and now in your face  
Are newly pencilled shades, the holy trace  
Of ineffable experience as, at last,  
Some imminent encounter has been passed,  
Now fire, and earth must break your image mild,  
Love pays the quiet due,  
You have become our master and God's child.  
We wince not, we kneel and think long, long of you.

MARGARET MAITLAND RADFORD.



## "DUBLINERS" AND MR. JAMES JOYCE.

**F**REEDOM from sloppiness is so rare in contemporary English prose that one might well say simply, "Mr. Joyce's book of short stories is prose free from sloppiness," and leave the intelligent reader ready to run from his study immediately to spend three and sixpence on the volume.

Unfortunately one's credit as a critic is insufficient to produce this result.

The readers of *THE EGOIST*, having had Mr. Joyce under their eyes for some months, will scarcely need to have his qualities pointed out to them. Both they and the paper have been very fortunate in his collaboration.

Mr. Joyce writes a clear hard prose. He deals with subjective things, but he presents them with such clarity of outline that he might be dealing with locomotives or with builders' specifications. For that reason one can read Mr. Joyce without feeling that one is conferring a favour. I must put this thing my own way. I know about 168 authors. About once a year I read something contemporary without feeling that I am softening the path for poor Jones or poor Fulano de Tal.

I can lay down a good piece of French writing and pick up a piece of writing by Mr. Joyce without feeling as if my head were being stuffed through a cushion. There are still impressionists about and I dare say they claim Mr. Joyce. I admire impressionist writers. English prose writers who haven't got as far as impressionism (that is to say, 95 per cent. of English writers of prose and verse) are a bore.

Impressionism has, however, two meanings, or perhaps I had better say, the word "impressionism" gives two different "impressions."

There is a school of prose writers, and of verse writers for that matter, whose forerunner was Stendhal and whose founder was Flaubert. The followers of Flaubert deal in exact presentation. They are often so intent on exact presentation that they neglect intensity, selection, and concentration. They are perhaps the most clarifying and they have been perhaps the most beneficial force in modern writing.

There is another set, mostly of verse writers, who founded themselves not upon anybody's writing but upon the pictures of Monet. Every movement in painting picks up a few writers who try to imitate in words what someone has done in paint. Thus one writer saw a picture by Monet and talked of "pink pigs blossoming on a hillside," and a later writer talked of "slate-blue" hair and "raspberry-coloured flanks."

These "impressionists" who write an imitation of Monet's softness instead of writing in imitation of Flaubert's definiteness, are a bore, a grimy, or perhaps I should say, a rosy, floribund bore.

The spirit of a decade strikes properly upon all of the arts. There are "parallel movements." Their causes and their effects may not seem, superficially, similar.

This mimicking of painting ten or twenty years late, is not in the least the same as the "literary movement" parallel to the painting movement imitated.

The force that leads a poet to leave out a moral reflection may lead a painter to leave out representation. The resultant poem may not suggest the resultant painting.

Mr. Joyce's merit, I will not say his chief merit but his most engaging merit, is that he carefully avoids telling you a lot that you don't want to know. He presents his people swiftly and vividly, he does not sentimentalise over them, he does not weave convolutions. He is a realist. He does not believe "life" would be all right if we stopped vivisection or if we instituted a new sort of "economics." He gives the thing as it is. He is not bound by the tiresome convention that any part of life, to be interesting, must be shaped into the conventional

form of a "story." Since De Maupassant we have had so many people trying to write "stories" and so few people presenting life. Life for the most part does not happen in neat little diagrams and nothing is more tiresome than the continual pretence that it does.

Mr. Joyce's "Araby," for instance, is much better than a "story," it is a vivid waiting.

It is surprising that Mr. Joyce is Irish. One is so tired of the Irish or "Celtic" imagination (or "phantasy" as I think they now call it) flopping about. Mr. Joyce does not flop about. He defines. He is not an institution for the promotion of Irish peasant industries. He accepts an international standard of prose writing and lives up to it.

He gives us Dublin as it presumably is. He does not descend to farce. He does not rely upon Dickensian caricature. He gives us things as they are, not only for Dublin, but for every city. Erase the local names and a few specifically local allusions, and a few historic events of the past, and substitute a few different local names, allusions and events, and these stories could be retold of any town.

That is to say, the author is quite capable of dealing with things about him, and dealing directly, yet these details do not engross him, he is capable of getting at the universal element beneath them.

The main situations of "Madame Bovary" or of "Doña Perfecta" do not depend on local colour or upon local detail, that is their strength. Good writing, good presentation can be specifically local, but it must not depend on locality. Mr. Joyce does not present "types" but individuals. I mean he deals with common emotions which run through all races. He does not bank on "Irish character." Roughly speaking, Irish literature has gone through three phases in our time, the shamrock period, the dove-grey period, and the Kiltartan period. I think there is a new phase in the works of Mr. Joyce. He writes as a contemporary of continental writers. I do not mean that he writes as a faddist, mad for the last note, he does not imitate Strindberg, for instance, or Bang. He is not ploughing the underworld for horror. He is not presenting a macabre subjectivity. He is classic in that he deals with normal things and with normal people. A committee room, Little Chandler, a nonentity, a boarding house full of clerks—these are his subjects and he treats them all in such a manner that they are worthy subjects of art.

Francis Jammes, Charles Vildrac and D. H. Lawrence have written short narratives in verse, trying, it would seem, to present situations as clearly as prose writers have done, yet more briefly. Mr. Joyce is engaged in a similar condensation. He has kept to prose not needing the privilege supposedly accorded to verse to justify his method.

I think that he excels most of the impressionist writers because of his more rigorous selection, because of his exclusion of all unnecessary detail.

There is a very clear demarcation between unnecessary detail and irrelevant detail. An impressionist friend of mine talks to me a good deal about "preparing effects," and on that score he justifies much unnecessary detail, which is not "irrelevant," but which ends by being wearisome and by putting one out of conceit with his narrative.

Mr. Joyce's more rigorous selection of the presented detail marks him, I think, as belonging to my own generation, that is, to the "nineteen-tens," not to the decade between "the 'nineties" and to-day.

At any rate these stories and the novel now appearing in serial form are such as to win for Mr. Joyce a very definite place among English contemporary prose writers, not merely a place in the "Novels of the Week" column, and our writers of good clear prose are so few that we cannot afford to confuse or to overlook them.

EZRA POUND.

"Dubliners," by James Joyce. Grant Richards. 3s. 6d.



## PASSING PARIS.

TO escape realism and attain art it is necessary to have steeped in reality (I believe it is given to few). The finite opens out the infinite,—truth is fond of hiding under word-play. Poetry that does not bear the stamp of experienced emotion may still be poetry—instance that of Edgar Allan Poe. Though not born of emotion it may impel it. There are emotions and emotions: the cheap and the rare. While rejecting the former do not let us ignore the latter, for without them where would be the world? As I am not intending to enumerate negations I will only say that much so-called poetry which is not linear, subjectively or objectively emotive, or musical, can, at best, only be an inventory of observations, a glossary of metaphor, or a mere technical feat. But everyone knows this.

He who transcends reality is he who has the keenest perception of it. The more intimate our contact with life the more distant our flights beyond may be. One of the most imaginative artists in the world to-day, of Celtic birth, would, as a child, lie on the ground with her ears and eyes as near the earth, as near the blade of grass, the creeping insect, as she could, questioning there what others seek in the skies. We obtain views as vast by looking inwards as by looking outwards. It is not the object seen which reveals, but the eye which sees.

There are expressions which, owing to a rupture of balance between the physical and the spiritual, the concrete and the abstract, are as valueless through their lack of form as, at the opposite pole, are realism and materialism. They are aimless, diffused, obscure, distressing and often reiterating like feverish dreams. If examples are wanted I will mention, at haphazard, many of the drawings and some of the writings of Blake, Rimband's poetry, the illustrations of Odilon Redon, some of Gustave Moreau's paintings. These expressions are from minds which have, as the French say, lost their foothold. They are, according to the popular term, but not in the popular sense, unbalanced. And art is balance: harmonious, and, if possible, exact, balance between perception and reason, abstract spirituality and concrete reality. In a word—consciousness. Art and poetry which are not conscious do not answer their purpose, and have as little effect or consequence as the hallucinations alluded to. They bring no new light. They are mere accumulations of uneloquent, sterile, mental chaos, as useless—since they are without key—as Robinson Crusoe's store of money was to him on his island.

This balance, failing which a work of art is without stamina and condemned in advance, whatever its other attractions may be, we find in the poems of Guy-Charles Cros,\* recently quoted here by Mr. Aldington, and classed by him as "fantaisistes." If this term implies that Mr. Cros is a poet among poets then it may be granted him, but if it catalogues him in some particular faction, sect, or schism, then it must be corrected, for Mr. Cros is affiliated to none such, and would resent being thus herded. He follows his own independent direction, and if, as he has said,

Nous voulons la beauté nouvelle,  
nous qui dansons sur les tombeaux !  
Gardez Mozart et Raphaël,  
Beethoven, Shakespeare, Marc-Aurèle ;  
moi, j'ai choisi d'être infidèle,  
je ne salue pas vos drapeaux,†

he wishes "the world's beauty to rise afresh in him each morning," and partisanship means stagnation. His independence permits him to vary his metre, to

pass from "vers libres" to Alexandrines, to rhyme or not according to his mood. Briefly, his freedom is his strength, as it always is:

Que mes poèmes soient rimés ou non,  
cadencés fortement ou de façon insensible,  
je sais que j'écris des vers qui resteront,  
et je me ris des théories et des doctrines.

He has, doubtless, written many poems—and perhaps the above may be of these—which are "fantaisistes" and whimsical in the sense that are Verlaine's, but one of his latest, published in *Le Double Bouquet* for June, can hardly be so qualified:

Tôt nous avions quitté la petite maison  
dont le bas mur ventru aux houles des moissons  
oppose un mur infranchissable,  
et nous avions gagné l'abri de la forêt  
vers où, tous ses buissons perleux encore, grimpait  
un paresseux chemin de sable.

La carrière s'ouvrait, blanche, au soleil nouveau ;  
l'arabesque rapide et nue d'un chant d'oiseau  
s'inscrivait sur le bleu silence.

Nous montions lentement, et le peuple des feuilles,  
plus dense à chaque pas, nous saluait au seuil  
enchanté de ses nefs immenses.

etc.

Nor can this one:

Vous qui ne connaissez ni regrets ni remords,  
qui ne pensez jamais aux affres de la mort,  
que le nom de l'Enfer n'a jamais fait trembler,  
quand la faux de douleur moissonnera vos blés,  
quand la décrépitude aura glacé vos veines,  
quels mots sauront bercer votre incurable peine  
si l'ardent souvenir de vos jours de soleil  
n'enchantait pas l'horreur de vos nuits sans sommeil ?  
Amassez donc les joies, s'il en est temps encore,  
aimez chaque couchant, adorez chaque aurore,  
respirez longuement la minute qui fuit,  
cueillez tous les désirs, goûtez à tous les fruits,  
avant que la vieillesse où vous allez descendre  
ne souffle entre vos dents le noir goût de la cendre,  
car ni poisons, ni or, ni lauriers, ni vertu,  
rien ne peut consoler qui n'aura pas vécu.

While conveying the sensation procured by certain scenes, Guy-Charles Cros has also a fine knack for evoking the scene itself in pictorial fashion. For instance:

Un oiseau nage dans le ciel  
à longs et paresseux coups d'aile ;  
il glisse, appuyé sur le vent.  
Et le silence ensoleillé  
de ce jour si beau n'est troublé  
que d'un frisson de branches lent.

Un nuage aussi vogue et passe,  
Léger, au plus haut de l'espace  
où tout est paix et liberté ;  
A l'horizon un toit seul fume  
vers le fin croissant de la lune  
tracé en clair dans la clarté.

Finally, I will make a very banal remark about the poems of Guy-Charles Cros—poems quivering with subdued excitement, burning with aspiration, or whipping forth irony, impertinent with devil-may-careness, often distinctly sensual, but the sensuality is a means, not an end:

L'amour, non, ce n'est pas ces femmes possédées  
jusqu'au soubresaut, jusqu'à la plainte ;  
ce n'est pas ces cris, ce n'est pas ces étreintes,  
ni ces ardeurs si vite exténuées.

Ce n'est pas ces mains qu'on baise, ni ces corps qu'on  
dénude

avec une triste hâte déjà déçue,  
ni ces pauvres joies dont on ne se souvient plus

\* Familiar to readers of the *Mercure de France*, *Vers et Prose*, etc. Author of *Le Soir et Le Silence* (Sansot), etc.

† *Les Fêtes Quotidiennes* (Editions du Mercure de France).



sitôt que quelques jours ont passés, lents, sur elles. Non.—C'est un battement d'ailes, un essor du corps et de l'âme vers plus haut, vers on ne sait quoi de divinément fraternel, d'absurdement abstrait et de follement charnel. vers quelque sommet blanc plus vierge que les mots ! C'est la chanson de l'arbre en juillet, sous l'averse ; c'est un éclair intermittent qui nous traverse, et à qui rien ne correspond hors de nous-mêmes, sinon que le soleil, plus vivant, nous transperce, et que la nuit est plus étoilée, quand on aime.

(love, he writes, "is a flutter of wings")—poems—stingingly sad, always in exquisite taste, since the emotions they reflect are never strained and the theme is never unduly diluted—but it is more than can be said of much poetry, however otherwise distinguished it may be: they are *interesting*, for a breath of life always animates, without disturbing, the art of their fine, easy, polished form; and not one of them but is nourished with savorous substance.

But how inadequate, how unfair is quotation, how utterly unsatisfactor is criticism, unless borne out by the complete work. How can one extract the juice and flavour from fruit which is all juice and flavour?

\* \* \*

Monsieur Guy-Charles Cros belongs to an exceptional family, the most exceptional member of which was his father, Charles Cros, a semi-Hindoo, an extraordinary man both of science and of letters. "His personality should be as familiar as that of the greatest celebrities," wrote a chronicler of his life (M. de Bersaucourt) recently. As a child of eleven he studied Eastern languages from books he found on the quays and at the public courses at the Sorbonne. At sixteen he taught Hebrew and Sanskrit. Later he became teacher of chemistry to a class of deaf and dumb pupils, then studied medicine and practised without taking his degree, which he always declined to be troubled with. This modern Paracelsus made a number of discoveries which he did not think worth exploiting. Thus he preceded Edison in the invention of the phonograph, depositing the secret in a sealed envelope with the Académie des Sciences on April 30, 1876. Shortly after, a paper called *La Semaine du Clergé* published a description of the instrument according to the details Cros had given a friend. Ten months later Edison took out his patent, which differed from Cros's invention only in so far that the former used a sheet of tin-plate where the latter employed glass covered with lamp-black. Charles Cros also anticipated the re-constitution of certain precious stones, invented coloured photography, and completed his resemblance with the alchemists of old by claiming to have found a means for interplanetary correspondence, asserting, moreover, that Mars and Venus have long been making signs to the Earth. He wrote an enormous book called "*La Mécanique Cérébrale*," comic monologues for Coquelin cadet, the great popularity of which in Paris society benefited the actor alone, all the credit and money going to him, and poems which survive in a volume entitled "*Le Coffret de Santal*." Cros did not, of course, resist the temptation so many clever but foolish men fall into—the most hazardous enterprise after building a house—namely, the founding of a literary review. "*La Revue du Monde Nouveau*" (published in 1874) ran to three numbers, but during this meteoric existence shone very brilliantly, for the contributors included, besides himself and his more exclusively poet-brother Antoine Cros, a third brother, Henri Cros, an artist and sculptor; Théodore de Banville, Léon Dierx, Leconte de Lisle, Villiers de L'Isle Adam, Emile Zola, Sully Prudhomme, Stéphane Mallarmé, José-Maria de Hérédia, Alphonse Daudet—in fact, all the writers through whom the period lives in our memories.

SAINT FIACRE.

## LIBERATIONS:

### STUDIES OF INDIVIDUALITY IN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC.

#### VI.—THE DRAMATIC CONCEPTIONS OF ALEXANDER SRIABINE.

THE fundamental importance of an art work to-day lies not so much in the exploitation of the technical resources of the branch of art employed as in the force of the intellectual conception which it expresses. The whole trend of evolution evinces with persistently increasing emphasis the growing necessity for mental power and perception. Humanity, evolving from the materially measurable obstacles and problems of the past is brought to-day, owing to the progress of science and mechanical invention, into direct contact with hitherto unsuspected elements, which being as yet impossible to equate materially require continual mental concentration to enable mankind to estimate and regulate their effect. This necessity for synthetic investigation has resulted in the birth of a new spirit which perceives in all things not only their external aspect, but the direct indication or revelation of the force which animates them.

Hence it follows that art-creation, being the immediate result of the individual experience produced by the epoch into which the artist is born, is to-day marked by a mental consciousness which has no accurate parallel in the history of the past. Following on this it will be apparent that the hitherto existing standards of values, technical or intellectual, are insufficient to estimate adequately or comprehend contemporary art creation which is the direct production of developments absolutely unimagined at the time of their institution.

To appreciate fully the development of art, it is necessary to recognise that all values are relative and that the belief in a fixed standard, technical or aesthetic, denotes a negation of the evolution of life as a whole. Technical artifice being merely the means by which the artist attains to the convincing and forcible exposition of his individual ideas, must of necessity admit of continual expansion to convey adequately the evolution of thought. Language itself, the primary medium of human expression and communication, is continually undergoing changes which are necessitated by the discovery and development of hitherto unrealised factors in human existence. It therefore follows that to attempt definitely to restrict art within the technical limitations of any epoch is to incapacitate its full and comprehensive expression of those which follow after. The discoveries of every period are the commonplaces of the next, and the reiteration of the commonplace is the mark of mediocrity resulting artistically in a monotony which is incompatible with the virile function of creation.

Hence it is evident that all truly significant art expression must be something in the nature of experiment as compared with the work preceding it, and it is therefore necessary in dealing with artistic innovations to discern and analyse the mental motives which influence the artist producing them in order to arrive at a just estimate of their values and proportions. The true criticism of an art-work is not regulated by its conformity with preconceived conceptions or standards, but by the force and originality of its internal quality and the adequacy with which it conveys the individuality of personal thought resultant from the epoch in which it is created.

The work of Alexander Scriabine (born at Moscow, January 10th, 1872) affords striking proof of the imperative need for this quality, being in its later development avowedly and definitely intellectual in essence, the record of the composer's psychological experience and his ever-increasing perception of the dramatic significance of the vital forces of life. Although framed in accordance with the conceptions of theosophy, it is of extreme interest as the expression of a mental individuality, nor is it less valuable because it treats of the general significance of fundamental impulses rather than of their personal application and concentration.



Commencing to write under the immediate influence of an intimate acquaintance with the works of Chopin, his earlier compositions are but little more than reflections of the Polish composer, though occasionally they display a tendency towards a more advanced technical structure, and are often more direct in expression. Written almost without exception in the form of lyrical pianoforte pieces (Waltz, Op. 1; Etudes, Opp. 2 and 8; Mazurkas, Opp. 3 and 25; Allegro Appassionata, Op. 4; Preludes and Nocturnes, Opp. 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, and 22; Impromptus, Opp. 7, 10, 12, and 14; Allegro de Concert, Op. 18; and Polonaise, Op. 21), they are seldom more than delicate but somewhat superficial toying with sentimental emotion and technical brilliancy, the productions of a conscious possession of executive facility and the artificial associations of the salon.

The Sonatas Nos. 1 and 3, Opp. 6 and 23, Sonata Fantasia No. 2, Op. 19, and the Concerto in F sharp for pianoforte and orchestra Opus 20, while displaying deeper emotion and stronger technical texture than the works of the composer upon which they are in general modelled, give no indication of the intellectual consciousness which is so apparent in Scriabine's later work, although the third Sonata evinces a marked development in the composer's perception of harmonic significance.

Following on this initial phase, Scriabine came under the influence of Liszt and, as a natural sequence though in a reflective manner, of Wagner also, the effect of the latter composer being small in comparison with the evident influence of the former. This development, while of little value to his purely musical evolution, was productive of an increased depth of utterance which can only be ascribed to a tentative search for the fundamentals of emotional expression.

The Reverie for orchestra, Op. 24, though distinguished by sensitive instrumentation is almost as sentimental and unreal in its context as anything produced by Liszt in his earlier affected style, though it must be admitted that it does not descend to the bathos of the Liebestraum and kindred works. The Fantasia, Op. 28, and the Preludes, Opp. 27, 31 and 33, are little more than exploitations of the pianoforte as a medium for executive skill, though decidedly on a higher level than the Rapsodies Hongroises and the sensational Concert Studies of the earlier composer. The Sonata No. 4, Op. 30, although containing more thoughtful material than in most of Scriabine's preceding works, is marred by a somewhat melodramatic straining after effect; but the Two Poems, Op. 32, and the Tragic Poem, Op. 34, contain much which worthily reflects the sincerity evinced in Liszt's Petrarcha Sonnet and the Symphonic Poems, while the Satanic Poem approaches in spirit, but with more reserve, the sinister dramatic quality of the same composer's Nocturne and Mephisto Waltz from the Two Episodes from "Faust" after Nicolaus Lenau.

But in all these works the full expression of Scriabine is obviously limited by the bias of the executive pianist; the symphonic works for orchestra, being unaffected by this obstacle, are more truly indicative of his mental development.

The Symphony in E major No. 1, Op. 26, may be traced directly to the intellectual influence exercised by an increasing acquaintance with the serious and thoughtful work of Liszt's later period. It is the first work by Scriabine which definitely presents an intellectual programme and is the logical outcome of the type of composition represented by the Hungarian composer's Symphonic Poem No. 12 (The Ideal). While having but little in common with the intricate and subtle quality of Scriabine's later work it is of extreme interest in that it denotes a definite realisation of the intellectual elements of music and a wider dramatic significance which surrounds all truly individual art-work. Scored for full orchestra and chorus the complex mental elements which combine in artistic creations are suggested in the texture and combinations of the instrumental writings, above which the chorus enunciates a thoughtful exposition of the composer's intellectual motives culminating in an apotheosis of the interpretative

function of art at the words "Glory be to Art for Ever and Ever."

The Second Symphony in C major, Op. 29, is scored for orchestra alone, and is marked by a much greater concentration of thought and expression. Here Scriabine presents the combined introspective and spiritual influences which are the sources of mental personality, and in a subtle undercurrent of thought analyses and indicates the significance of their wider dramatic import. Technically the music is considerably in advance of the symphony preceding it and evinces in the tentative experimental trend of its harmonic material and the freedom of its instrumental treatment a manifestation of the composer's realisation of the progressive force of conscious individuality.

The signs of intellectual consciousness first evident in these works grow persistently stronger in those following. The Preludes, Opp. 37 and 39, and the Poem, Op. 41, for pianoforte are marked by a concentrated attention to and search for tonal significance and a continual striving towards the elimination of all artificiality which might obscure the mental conception animating the work. There is also evident an intensified perception of the dramatic significance of musical colour which is shown in the vivid and often violent contrast of harmonic material, which, while occasionally abortive owing to crude manipulation, is of extreme interest when regarded as an attempt to correlate and extend the interpretative capacity of art expression. These efforts towards a truly comprehensive exposition of creative impulse, which are further denoted by the rhythmic quality of the Eight Studies, Op. 42, attain their first perfectly coherent realisation in the Third Symphony in C major, Op. 43 (The Divine Poem). This work presents the realisation of the complex motives which make up the broad dramaticism of creative activity and marks the true appearance of Scriabine as a liberated and individual thinker in music. Presenting a number of mental incidents through the medium of a novel harmonic and thematic expression, it enables us to realise the dramatic outline by which such incidents are embraced, and thus contains the first definite postulation of the subtle creative style which gives to the later work of Scriabine a distinct and significant character. The qualities first evident in this work are developed with increasing surety in the Fantastic Poem, Op. 45, the Four Pieces (Fragility, Prelude, Winged Poem, and Languid Dance), Op. 51, and the Sonata No. 5, Op. 53.

The fourth symphonic work, the Poem of Ecstasy, Op. 54, which is not described as a symphony proper, presents the wider dramatic aspect of the elements resulting in ecstasy; the state which arises from and transcends all portentous and comprehensive conceptions, and which has given birth to the curious visionary quality so evident in the older mystical writings and the later work of Friedrich Nietzsche. It is peculiarly interesting in that it first displays Scriabine's discovery of the luminous colour-attributes of certain harmonic combinations and also contains the initial free use of the new six-tone chord-scale (roughly describable as the first, second, third and sixth intervals of the diatonic scale, with sharp fourth and flat seventh, the fifth being omitted) which Scriabine has constructed from the fundamental series of overtones. The development of the expressive qualities of this innovation is a marked feature of the Four Pieces (Prelude, Ironies, Nuances, and Etude), Op. 56, Two Pieces (Desire and Caresse Dansée), Op. 57, and Two Pieces (Poem and Prelude, marked "savage and bellicose"), Op. 59.

The fifth symphonic work, Prometheus: The Poem of Fire, is the most complete exposition up to the present of both Scriabine's philosophic conceptions and technical methods. For those of us who are not theosophists the motive underlying it may be compared to the doctrine of Aspiration, which inspires the poetic work of Albert Mockel, whose literary methods approximate closely to the musical devices employed by Scriabine. The programme of the work seeks to convey the development of conscious creative power which, according to theosophical concepts, was awakened by the Promethean gift



of fire, the sacred spark which ignites human intelligence and self-consciousness, and its full significance can best be appreciated by a brief outline of its general scheme.

The opening movement, *Lento*, commences with a harmonic combination (the chord of the ninth with an augmented fifth) directly derived from the new scale material, inaugurated by Scriabine. The nebulous atmosphere created by this chord is reinforced by sustained string tremolos and vague passages for wood-wind, above the roll of timpani, creating an effect of primeval chaos. A theme for horns, marked "calm and contemplative," emerges from this chaotic background and is succeeded by the Prometheus motive, given to trumpets and marked "imperious," which is intended to convey the spirit of creative will. The shadowy atmosphere becomes impregnated with increasing vitality, while a new theme marked "contemplative" is given out by flutes and horns and alternates with the Promethean theme which is now taken up by the pianoforte. This section, indicative of the process of mental awakening, is followed by a joyous and animated passage for pianoforte, which conveys the growth of human self-consciousness. This gives place to a languorous motive for wood-wind, indicating a thirst for more intense vitality, after which the pianoforte continues in a passage marked "very animated, glittering" to express material and intellectual development. Later human love and desire, with the consciousness of pain, enter, the pianoforte having a passage marked "voluptuous, almost with anguish," while a rapturous motive for solo flute and cor inglese, above viola and harp, is frequently recurrent. To this succeed themes of enthusiasm, fascination and defiance, each significant mood-section being preceded by a fresh announcement of the Promethean theme. Conflict enters and grows to a stormy climax which ends in a passage marked "piercing as a cry." Thenceforward a more purely intellectual animation, significant of man's subjugation of material complexities, dominates the music, succeeded by a triumphant inter-climax which is followed by a series of extremely liquid passages in which the earlier theme of joyous animation is greatly employed. The musical colouring grows persistently more intense until the entrance of the final rapid and soaring theme, which is marked "dancing, winged as in flight," which works up from an initial murmur to a huge tone climax that brings the work to a conclusion.

The work is of very large dimensions, being scored for full orchestra and pianoforte, with organ and mixed chorus ad libitum, with the unusual addition of an arrangement of lights to be attached to the pianoforte keyboard, which is Scriabine's own invention. This has never been demonstrated in public, but has undergone successful experimental tests in private. Scriabine has personally provided a list of the colours which he proved to be yielded by the various notes. His table reads as follows:—

C—red.	F—dark red.
G—rosy orange.	F sharp—bright blue.
D—yellow.	D flat—violet.
A—green.	A flat—purple.
E } pearl blue with a sheen	E flat } steely with a glint
B } of moonlight.	B flat } of metal.

The investigation of this chromatic quality of tone is a very apparent feature of the *Two Poems* (*Masque and Etrangeté*), Op. 63, the *Poem Nocturne*, Op. 61, the succeeding five sonatas, Opp. 66, 68, and 70, and the *Poems*, Op. 69.

Following logically on the innovations of his previous work Scriabine is at present engaged on an entirely unprecedented art conception which he has pre-named "A Mystery," with a separate introductory portion entitled "Preliminary Action." In this work he purposes a synthesis of aesthetic sensations, proposing to extend the scope of this combination by a fusion of primary and secondary arts, introducing not only gesture, movement and lights, in addition to the ordinary chorus and orchestra, but a sub-orchestra of perfumes also. He further aims by a novel disposition of this material at removing the barriers which separate

executants and audience, rendering the latter passive performers by enclosing them in a circle of interpretive sensations. As the work is not yet complete it is impossible to pass any opinion upon its merits; but the writings of the ancient and modern mystics combined with the results of recent scientific investigations seem to point towards a common element in colour, light, scent, and sound. Furthermore, the correlative trend of art expression to-day makes evident the common impulses of all its branches.

The employment (by Sibelius, Koechlin, Schöberg, and others) of polyphony, by harmonic streams which has replaced the older method of writing in imitative or melodic parts, together with the harmonic development in polytonic chords postulated by M. Villermin, have their direct analogy in the free use of colour and disintegration of form and light employed by the modern Parisian group of Simultanist painters, whose theories are so admirably interpreted by their creator, Madame Sonia Delaunay, in her *Premier Livre Simultané*, and which have their literary counterpart in the new poetic æsthetic of Simultaneity originated by H. M. Barzun. This latter conception may be summarised briefly as a rendering of incidents and sensations simultaneously as they actually occur, and not in the sequential manner which has been customary in the poems of the past.

Then also we have musical elision, or elimination of superfluous transitions, a method which closely approximates not only to elliptical painting, but to direct imagism and the condensed metaphors and words at liberty advocated by Marinetti and the Italian Futurists.

The simplification which is a feature of Post Impressionism and of modern scenic settings has an evident and close relationship to the free use of unresolved dissonances and negation of key-relationships which characterise the works of Debussy, Roland Manuel, and other French composers, while the octave leaps in Schönberg's pianoforte works have a direct analogy in the methods of the Pointellists.

In addition to these developments we have the later poems of Guillaume Apollinaire, which dispense with punctuation, and the form of which is, in spirit, closely allied to the repudiation of bar divisions and time signatures evinced in the work of Ernest Austin and Erik Satie.

Furthermore, in the polyrhythmic innovations of Pratella, Sibelius, and Strawinsky, is evinced not only the strong relationship with the liberated verse form instituted by Verhaenen and Gustave Kahn, but an evident musical emanation from the same forces as have given birth to the Italian Futurist conceptions of simultaneous states of animation, line-force and dynamic sensations which are rendered in their painting and sculpture.

Scriabine also, by his experiments with the intellectual colour significance and relationship of tones, shows himself to be the musical equation of the Polish painter Wassily Kandinsky, who is endeavouring to render the spiritual force of colour in musical dimensions, and of the literary conception of symbolic vowel colour expressed by Alfred Rimbaud.

It is impossible to treat exhaustively of contemporary art analogies in the space of a summary: enough has been demonstrated to show the close consistency of impulse, purpose and expression which characterises the hitherto separate branches of art to-day, and to indicate the signs which point towards their ultimate fusion.

The operas of Wagner, though courageously and intellectually conceived as a combination of the arts, do not survive the test of actual production. Their dramatic outline, by removing the necessity for a close attention to musical architectonics, gives a certain freedom to intellectual expression, but they are essentially of a hybrid nature with the preponderance of one dominant strain. The over-attention given by the composer to musical development and elaboration hinders the proportionate movement of the dramatic action and renders the stage wearisome by the consequent unnecessary and incongruous length of the scenes.



Further obstacles in the way of theatrical dramatic expression, operatic or otherwise, are the reconstructions necessitated by the employment of gesture, movement, musical commentary, elocution or vocalisation, and scenic setting, which generally result in a combination which obliterates or disrupts the original conception of the dramatist.

The metachoric dance creation of Valentine de Saint Point is the most coherent attempt at art fusion up to the present; but notwithstanding its comprehensive character it fails to include or give just importance to the sensory intellectual mediums of light and scent.

These omissions are supplied in the plan of Scriabine's *Mystery*. Whether successful or not in their ultimate art form it is necessary to approach these innovations with the sincere consideration merited by the fine interpretive quality and high state of sensitive development evinced in the existing works of one who has done so much to realise his avowed purpose—the creation in music of “a dramatic world without need of words or acts.”

LEIGH HENRY.

## BLAST.

By RICHARD ALDINGTON.

IT seems incredible but there must be in all of us something of what is known as national sentiment.

We are the children of our soil and climate, and however much we may detest them, however much we may feel that we really belong to other latitudes, something in this island—its soil and climate, as I say—still compels us to prefer those who are like us to any other people. That is putting it rather strongly; it might be better to take an illustration and say that we would rather an Englishman won the Diamonds than a foreigner. In the same way we rather like to think that Shakespeare is the greatest poet in the world and Turner the greatest landscape painter.

If you feel that way it is rather a shock to go to the exhibition of pictures at the Anglo-American exhibition and see how much better the American artists are than the English—why, even Mr. Epstein is an American! It is humiliating to think that no Englishman has ever written a novel. It is terribly humiliating for me to see the kind of stuff that is called poetry over here, so that for my articles I am compelled to take German poets and French poets and American poets, but hardly ever an English poet. I almost fancy that Mr. W. S. Blunt and I are the only English poets living—but lots of people will object if I say that!

Because of all this I am extremely glad to welcome the appearance of “Blast”—a periodical which is designed to be the organ for new, vigorous art in England. It is true that even “Blast” contains such alien names as Gaudier Brzeska and Ezra Pound, that Mr. Lewis is half Welsh, and Mr. Wadsworth half Scotch; but still the paper is an effort to look at art from an Anglo-Saxon point of view instead of from a borrowed foreign standpoint. Its editor, Mr. Wyndham Lewis, has carefully and wittily compiled a series of manifestos—to to which we have all gleefully set our names—in which the distressing and cow-like qualities of this nation are successfully blasted, and the admirable, unique and dominating characteristics piously blessed.

It is not in the least surprising that such an effort on the part of English artists should arouse a dismal howl of protest from the reviewers and an extraordinary amount of interest in a fairly large section of the public. The protest of the reviewers is the time-honoured, or rather dishonoured, cry of the slavish against the free, of the unenterprising against the original, of the sluggish against the active. That the interest of the public is keen I can myself testify. On two occasions I have seen copies of “Blast” brought into crowded rooms—full of ordinary sort of people—and from that moment “Blast” has been the sole topic of conversation.

All that, perhaps, does not matter, and yet it is rather important for people generally to realise that the

Press intentionally misrepresents the purpose and achievement of a periodical like “Blast.”

And what is this art like—this purely English art? Quite naturally it is energetic, tremendously energetic, serious mostly, but with frequent British grins, and rather religious.

Let us examine these qualities in the literary and artistic works of Mr. Lewis and Mr. Wadsworth. To me the most portentous, the surprising piece of work in the whole volume is Mr. Lewis' “Enemy of the Stars.” It stirs one up like a red-hot poker. Of course, I don't “understand” it, in the sense that I cannot tell you exactly what the characters looked like, what they dressed in, or quite what they did. It doesn't seem to me necessary that one should “understand” a work of art in the sense that one understands a geometric problem or a legal document. The important thing is that one should realise the artist's personality, and undergo the emotions he intended you to undergo in the contemplation of his work.

I do perceive a strong, unique personality in Mr. Lewis' “Enemy of the Stars”; I do receive all manner of peculiar and intense emotions from it. I do not like the abstract in art on principle—I am a sensualist. And Mr. Lewis' play or story or poem or



THE LEWIS-BRZESKA-POUND TROUPE.

Blasting their own trumpets before the walls of Jericho.

whatever it is does not seem abstract to me. The parts I like best in it are the sudden clear *images* which break across it—flashes of lightning suddenly displaying forms above the dark abysmal conflict. For example, this from “The Yard”:

“Three trees, above canal, sentimental, black and conventional in number, drive leaf flocks, with jeering cry.”

“Or they slightly bend their joints, impassible acrobats; step rapidly forward, faintly incline their heads.”

“Across the mud in pod of the canal their shadows are gauky toy crocodiles, sawed up and down by infant giant.”

This much for the energy—at present—which I think no one will deny. It seems to me that this hard, telegraphic sort of writing expresses pretty well one side of our modern life. I don't know that I shall write like that myself, because I always write grammatically constructed telegrams—but in our day when we are much too impatient to read stuff like “Sir Charles Grandison,”



when we want to get the crux of the matter, the intensity of emotion, as quickly as possible, the telegraphic method seems to me to have very serious recommendations. It is a bore to read a novel, because novelists drag in a whole lot of extraneous matter which somehow deadens the emotion received as a thick cotton pad deadens a blow. And poetry, written in "poetic diction" is a bore, simply because it is affected and lifeless. You have, then, the problem of conveying emotions in such a way as not to bore the reader with miles of prose and not to bore him with obsolete traditional diction. Mr. Lewis' play solves it in one way; I think the best of the Imagiste poems do so, too.

I won't pick out little spots of humour for quotation—readers will find them quick enough. Remember that one of the manifestos says, "We only want tragedy if it can clench its side-muscles like hands on its belly, and bring to the surface a laugh like a bomb."

As to the religious part of this movement—I don't expect the other members will agree with me on this point, and yet it seems to me the one danger of the thing. Some people like religion; I don't. And it seems to me that the profound intellectuality, the love of abstract design, of abstract colour, the serious revolt against the Renaissance and all sensuousness—all of which I agree is perfectly and truthfully English—give to this movement something which I can only call religious. I am told—not by a Vorticist—that religion is exactly the thing that is needed now.

All that may or may not be true, and for all immediate purposes it doesn't much matter. I imagine Mr. Lewis has too much commonsense for him to be drawn into any religious revival. As to Mr. Pound, I am not so sure. As the uncleanness of his language increases to an almost laughable point the moral sentiment of his writing becomes more and more marked. I understand that some people are objecting strongly to certain words in one of Mr. Pound's poems in "Blast"; that, of course, is their affair, but the amusing thing to me is that this poem was obviously written with a strong moral purpose. It is not my business to abuse Mr. Pound—he gets enough of it from other people—and I shall probably be called all kinds of sad names if I say that his contributions to "Blast" are quite unworthy of their author. It is not that one wants Mr. Pound to repeat his Provençal feats, to echo the 'nineties—he has done that too much already—it is simply the fact that Mr. Pound cannot write satire. Mr. Pound is one of the gentlest, most modest, bashful, kind creatures who ever walked this earth; so I cannot help thinking that all this enormous arrogance and petulance and fierceness are a pose. And it is a wearisome pose.

Mr. Gaudier Brzeska is really a wild, unkempt barbarian, with a love of form and a very clear knowledge of the comparative history of sculpture. He is the sort of person who would dye his statues in the gore of goats if he thought it would give them a more virile appearance; if he were a Naturalist he would chain slaves to rocks in order that he might reproduce their contortions. Fortunately he is not a Naturalist, and his worst crimes consist in a somewhat terrifying abuse of all Greek sculpture whatsoever, and of everything which is not tremendously virile and cannibalistic and geometric. His "Vortex" is extremely good reading, even if you don't understand it; though I see no reason why any reasonably intelligent person should not understand it. He thinks in form—abstract form—instead of in things or ideas. He is perhaps the most promising artist we have. If he ever becomes civilised he will lick creation.

As to the rest of the volume it is divided between a story by Miss Rebecca West, part of a novel by Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer, and various notes by the Editor. The reproductions of some fine pictures by various members of the Vorticist group are one of the most valuable contributions to the study of modern art. I particularly like Mr. Lewis' "Plan of War" and Mr. Wadsworth's "March." Mr. Wadsworth is personally so retiring and generous to his fellow painters that his own work is sometimes a little under-estimated. He has a very energetic conception of design. His woodcut of "New-

castle-on-Tyne" is a fine piece of geometric abstraction. I am not an art critic, so I suppose I have no right to praise or dispraise these works, still it seems to me, as an outsider, that these Vorticist painters have created something like a new form of art. In the 'nineties it was said that only an auctioneer admired all schools of art. I suppose I am an auctioneer, because my liking for the pictures of Picasso or Mr. Wadsworth, or even Mr. Etchells does not in the least spoil my old literary liking for such terribly over-suave, over-sweet, over-graceful productions as Tanagra statuettes and Japanese prints. What Vorticism does kill is any lingering feeling for imitative art—I mean art which was not the expression of anything of its own time but merely a copy of some earlier period. Thus, the sculpture of the eighteenth century and the paintings of most of the pre-Raphaelites have no longer the least meaning for me.

Vorticism is the death of necrology in art.

What more is there to say? Only, I think, a pious wish that these painters and writers will continue to publish stuff as good as that in the first number.

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I regret to say that this important production has robbed me of space which was promised to other books. I hope authors will forgive a further delay.

## A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN.

By JAMES JOYCE.

STEPHEN'S mother and his brother and one of his cousins waited at the corner of quiet Foster Place while he and his father went up the steps and along the colonade where the Highland sentry was parading. When they had passed into the great hall and stood at the counter Stephen drew forth his orders on the Governor of the Bank of Ireland for thirty and three pounds; and these sums, the moneys of his exhibition and essay prize, were paid over to him rapidly by the teller in notes and in coin respectively. He bestowed them in his pockets with feigned composure and suffered the friendly teller, to whom his father chatted, to take his hand across the broad counter and wish him a brilliant career in after-life. He was impatient of their voices and could not keep his feet at rest. But the teller still deferred the serving of others to say he was living in changed times and that there was nothing like giving a boy the best education that money could buy. Mr. Dedalus lingered in the hall gazing about him and up at the roof, and telling Stephen, who urged him to come out, that they were standing in the House of Commons of the old Irish parliament.

— God help us! he said piously, to think of the men of those times, Stephen, Hely Hutchinson and Flood and Henry Grattan and Charles Kendal Bushe, and the noblemen we have now, leaders of the Irish people at home and abroad. Why, by God, they wouldn't be seen dead in a ten-acre field with them. No, Stephen, old chap, I'm sorry to say that they are only as I roved out one fine morning in the merry month of sweet July.

A keen October wind was blowing round the bank. The three figures standing at the edge of the muddy path had pinched cheeks and watery eyes. Stephen looked at his thinly clad mother and remembered that a few days before he had seen a mantle priced at twenty guineas in the windows of Barnardo's.

— Well that's done, said Mr. Dedalus.

— We had better go to dinner, said Stephen. Where?

— Dinner? said Mr. Dedalus. Well, I suppose we had better, what?

— Some place that's not too dear, said Mrs. Dedalus.

— Underdone's?

— Yes. Some quiet place.

— Come along, said Stephen quickly. It doesn't matter about the dearness.

He walked on before them with short nervous steps, smiling. They tried to keep up with him, smiling also at his eagerness.



— Take it easy like a good young fellow, said his father. We're not out for the half mile, are we?

For a swift season of merrymaking the money of his prizes ran through Stephen's fingers. Great parcels of groceries and delicacies and dried fruits arrived from the city. Every day he drew up a bill of fare for the family and every night led a party of three or four to the theatre to see *Ingomar* or *The Lady of Lyons*. In his coat pockets he carried squares of Vienna chocolate for his guests while his trousers' pockets bulged with masses of silver and copper coins. He bought presents for everyone, overhauled his room, wrote out resolutions, marshalled his books up and down their shelves, pored upon all kinds of price lists, drew up a form of commonwealth for the household by which every member of it held some office, opened a loan bank for his family and pressed loans on willing borrowers so that he might have the pleasure of making out receipts and reckoning the interests on the sums lent. When he could do no more he drove up and down the city in trams. Then the season of pleasure came to an end. The pot of pink enamel paint gave out and the wainscot of his bedroom remained with its unfinished and ill-plastered coat.

His household returned to its usual way of life. His mother had no further occasion to upbraid him for squandering his money. He, too, returned to his old life at school and all his novel enterprises fell to pieces. The commonwealth fell, the loan bank closed its coffers and its books on a sensible loss, the rules of life which he had drawn about himself fell into desuetude.

How foolish his aim had been! He had tried to build a breakwater of order and elegance against the sordid tide of life without him and to dam up, by rules of conduct and active interests and new filial relations, the powerful recurrence of the tide within him. Useless. From without as from within the water had flowed over his barriers: their tide began once more to jostle fiercely above the crumbled mole.

He saw clearly, too, his own futile isolation. He had not gone one step nearer the lives he had sought to approach, nor bridged the restless shame and rancour that had divided him from mother and brother and sister. He felt that he was hardly of the one blood with them but stood to them rather in the mystical kinship of fosterage, foster child and foster brother.

He turned to appease the fierce longings of his heart before which everything else was idle and alien. He cared little that he was in mortal sin, that his life had grown to be a tissue of subterfuge and falsehood. Beside the savage desire within him to realise the enormities which he brooded on nothing was sacred. He bore cynically with the shameful details of his secret riots in which he exulted to defile with patience whatever image had attracted his eyes. By day and by night he moved among distorted images of the outer world. A figure that had seemed to him by day demure and innocent came towards him by night through the winding darkness of sleep, her face transfigured by a lecherous cunning, her eyes bright with brutish joy. Only the morning pained him with its dim memory of dark orgiastic riot, its keen and humiliating sense of transgression.

He returned to his wanderings. The veiled autumnal evenings led him from street to street as they had led him years before along the quiet avenues of Blackrock. But no vision of trim front gardens or of kindly lights in the windows poured a tender influence upon him now. Only at times, in the pauses of his desire, when the luxury that was wasting him gave room to a softer languor, the image of Mercedes traversed the background of his memory. He saw again the small white house and the garden of rosebushes on the road that led to the mountains and he remembered the sadly proud gesture of refusal which he was to make there, standing with her in the moonlit garden after years of estrangement and adventure. At those moments the soft speeches of Claude Melnotte rose to his lips and eased his unrest. A tender premonition touched him of the tryst he had then looked forward to, and, in spite of the horrible reality which lay between his hope of then and now, of the holy encounter he had then imagined at

which weakness and timidity and inexperience were to fall from him.

Such moments passed and the wasting fires of lust sprang up again. The verses passed from his lips and the inarticulate cries and the unspoken brutal words rushed forth from his brain to force a passage. His blood was in revolt. He wandered up and down the dark slimy streets peering into the gloom of lanes and doorways, listening eagerly for any sound. He moaned to himself like some baffled prowling beast. He wanted to sin with another of his kind, to force another being to sin with him and to exult with her in sin. He felt some dark presence moving irresistibly upon him from the darkness, a presence subtle and murmurous as a flood filling him wholly with itself. Its murmur besieged his ears like the murmur of some multitude in sleep; its subtle streams penetrated his being. His hands clenched convulsively and his teeth set together as he suffered the agony of its penetration. He stretched out his arms in the street to hold fast the frail swooning form that eluded him and incited him: and the cry that he had strangled for so long in his throat issued from his lips. It broke from him like a wail of despair from a hell of sufferers and died in a wail of furious entreaty, a cry for an iniquitous abandonment, a cry which was but the echo of obscene scrawl which he had read on the oozing wall of a urinal.

He had wandered into a maze of narrow and dirty streets. From the foul laneways he heard bursts of hoarse riot and wrangling and the drawling of drunken singers. He walked onward, undismayed, wondering whether he had strayed into the quarter of the Jews. Women and girls dressed in long vivid gowns traversed the street from house to house. They were leisurely and perfumed. A trembling seized him and his eyes grew dim. The yellow gasflames arose before his troubled vision against the vapoury sky, burning as if before an altar. Before the doors and in the lighted halls groups were gathered arrayed as for some rite. He was in another world: he had awakened from a slumber of centuries.

He stood still in the middle of the roadway, his heart clamouring against his bosom in a tumult. A young woman dressed in a long pink gown laid her hand on his arm to detain him and gazed into his face. She said gaily:

— Good night, Willie dear!

Her room was warm and lightsome. A huge doll sat with her legs apart in the copious easychair beside the bed. He tried to bid his tongue speak that he might seem at ease, watching her as she undid her gown, noting the proud conscious movements of the perfumed head.

As he stood silent in the middle of the room she came over to him and embraced him gaily and gravely. Her round arms held him firmly to her, and he, seeing her face lifted to him in serious calm and feeling the warm calm rise and fall of her breast, all but burst into hysterical weeping. Tears of joy and of relief shone in his delighted eyes and his lips parted though they would not speak.

She passed her tinkling hand through his hair, calling him a little rascal.

— Give me a kiss, she said.

His lips would not bend to kiss her. He wanted to be held firmly in her arms, to be caressed slowly, slowly, slowly. In her arms he felt that he had suddenly become strong and fearless and sure of himself. But his lips would not bend to kiss her.

With a sudden movement she bowed his head and joined her lips to his, and he read the meaning of her movements in her frank uplifted eyes. It was too much for him. He closed his eyes, surrendering himself to her, body and mind, conscious of nothing in the world but the dark pressure of her softly parting lips. They pressed upon his brain as upon his lips as though they were the vehicle of a vague speech; and between them he felt an unknown and timid pressure, darker than the swoon of sin, softer than sound or odour.

(To be continued.)



## POEMS.

By JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

## LONDON EXCURSION.—II.

## 'BUS.

Great walls of green,  
City that is afar.

We gallop along  
Alert and penetrating,  
Roads open about us,  
Housetops keep at a distance.

Soft-curling tendrils,  
Swim backwards from our image:  
We are a red bulk,  
Projecting the angular city, in shadows, at our feet.

Black coarse-squared shapes,  
Hump and growl and assemble.  
It is the city that takes us to itself,  
Vast thunder riding down strange skies.

An arch under which we slide  
Divides our lives for us:  
After we have passed it  
We know we have left something behind  
We shall not see again.

Passivity,  
Gravity,  
Are changed into hesitating, clanking pistons and  
wheels.  
The trams come whooping up one by one,  
Yellow pulse-beats spreading through darkness.

Music-hall posters squall out:  
The passengers shrink together,  
I enter indelicately into all their souls.

It is a glossy skating rink,  
On which winged spirals clasp and bend each other:  
And suddenly slide backwards towards the centre,  
After a too-brief release.

A second arch is a wall  
To separate our souls from rotted cables  
Of stale greenness.

A shadow cutting off the country from us,  
Out of it rise red walls.

Yet I revolt: I bend, I twist myself,  
I curl into a million convolutions:  
Pink shapes without angle,  
Anything to be soft and woolly,  
Anything to escape.

Sudden lurch of clamours,  
Two more viaducts  
Stretch out red yokes of steel,  
Crushing my rebellion.

My soul  
Shrieking  
Is jolted forwards by a long hot bar—  
Into direct distances.  
It pierces the small of my back.

## APPROACH.

Only this morning I sang of roses;  
Now I see with a swift stare,  
The city forcing up through the air  
Black cubes close piled and some half-crumbling  
over.

My roses are battered into pulp:  
And there swells up in me  
Sudden desire for something changeless,  
Thrusts of sunless rock  
Unmelted by hissing wheels.

## ARRIVAL.

Here is too swift a movement,  
The rest is too still.

It is a red sea  
Licking  
The housefronts.

They quiver gently  
From base to summit.  
Ripples of impulse run through them,  
Flattering resistance.

Soon they will fall;  
Already smoke yearns upward.  
Clouds of dust,  
Crash of collapsing cubes.

I prefer deeper patience,  
Monotony of stalled beasts.  
O angle-builders,  
Vainly have you prolonged your effort,  
For I descend amid you,  
Past rungs and slopes of curving slippery steel.

## WALK.

Sudden struggle for foothold on the pavement,  
Familiar ascension.

I do not heed the city any more,  
It has given me a duty to perform.  
I pass along nonchalantly,  
Insinuating myself into self-baffling movements.  
Impalpable charm of back streets  
In which I find myself:  
Cool spaces filled with shadow.  
Passers-by, white hammocks in the sunlight.

Bulging outerush into old tumult;  
Attainment, as of a narrow harbour,  
Of some shop forgotten by traffic  
With cool-corridored walls.

## 'BUS-TOP.

Black shapes bending,  
Taxicabs crush in the crowd.

The tops are each a shining square  
Shuttles that steadily press through woolly fabric.

Drooping blossom,  
Gas-standards over  
Spray out jingling tumult  
Of white-hot rays.

Monotonous domes of bowler-hats  
Vibrate in the heat.

Silently, easily we sway through braying traffic,  
Down the crowded street.  
The tumult crouches over us,  
Or suddenly drifts to one side.

## TRANSPOSITION.

I am blown like a leaf  
Hither and thither.



The city about me  
Resolves itself into sound of many voices,  
Rustling and fluttering,  
Leaves shaken by the breeze.

A million forces ignore me, I know not why,  
I am drunken with it all.  
Suddenly I feel an immense will  
Stored up hitherto and unconscious till this instant,  
Projecting my body  
Across a street, in the face of all its traffic.

I dart and dash:  
I do not know why I go.  
These people watch me,  
I yield them my adventure.

Lazily I lounge through labyrinthine corridors,  
And with eyes suddenly altered,  
I peer into an office I do not know,  
And wonder at a startled face that penetrates my  
own.

Roses—pavement—  
I will take all this city away with me—  
People — uproar — the pavement jostling and  
flickering—  
Women with incredible eyelids:  
Dandies in spats:  
Hard-faced throng discussing me—I know them all.  
I will take them away with me,  
I insistently rob them of their essence,  
I must have it all before night,  
To sing amid my green.

I would glide out unobservant  
In the midst of the traffic  
Blown like a leaf  
Hither and thither,  
Till the city resolves itself into a clamour of voices,  
Crying hollowly, like the wind rustling through the  
forest,  
Against the frozen housefronts:  
Lost in the glitter of a million movements.

#### PERIPETEIA.

I can no longer find a place for myself:  
I go.

There are too many things to detain me,  
But the force behind is reckless.

Noise, uproar, movement  
Slide me outwards,  
Black sleet shivering  
Down red walls.

In thick jungles of green, this gyration,  
My centrifugal folly,  
Through roaring dust and futility spattered,  
Will find its own repose.  
Golden lights will gleam out sullenly into silence,  
Before I return.

#### MID-FLIGHT.

We rush, a black throng,  
Straight upon darkness:  
Motes scattered  
By the arc's rays.

Over the bridge fluttering,  
It is theatre-time,  
No one heeds.

Lost amid greenness  
We will sleep all night;  
And in the morning  
Coming forth, we will shake wet wings  
Over the settled dust of to-day.

The city hurls its cobbled streets after us,  
To drive us faster.

We must attain the night  
Before endless processions  
Of lamps  
Push us back.  
A clock with quivering hands  
Leaps to the trajectory-angle of our departure.

We leave behind pale traces of achievement:  
Fires that we kindled but were too tired to put out,  
Broad gold fans brushing softly over dark walls,  
Stifled uproar of night.

We are already cast forth:  
The signal of our departure  
Jerks down before we have learned we are to go.

#### STATION.

We descend  
Into a wall of green  
Straggling shapes:  
Afterwards none are seen.

I find myself  
Alone.  
I look back:  
The city has grown

One grey wall  
Windowed, unlit.  
Heavily, night  
Crushes the face of it.

I go on.  
My memories freeze  
Like birds' cry  
In hollow trees.

I go on  
Up and outright  
To the hostility  
Of night.

#### LUCIE DELARUE-MARDRUS.

**B**ECAUSE, no doubt, she is not dull and pompous, far-fetched, or abstract and symbolical, Mme. Delarue-Mardrus (in her aspect as novelist, for she is also a poet) has not the popularity, or "press," as they say in France, she deserves. She is read by all but she is criticised by many. Yet her last book, "Le Cancre" (Fasquelle), might be signed by a Gorki or an Andreief without a whit of dishonour to them. Lucie Delarue-Mardrus is the greatest French realist since Rousseau and Flaubert. For there is much to be done with plain, vigorous reality, but few can do it. Most realists have tried to render life by enumeration of facts and details—this is life catalogued, pinned, stuffed, and sterilised like specimens in museums. They used the mind's eye to see life, thus reality escaped them, for Nature is not approached with the reason, but with the senses and intuition. Therefore, one might suppose, did not numerous exceptions contradict the theory, that the novel—which is another word for realism—was particularly woman's sphere. Man would seem to be a too intellectual animal for this form of litera-



ture, had we not Thomas Hardy, the Russians, and so many women more gifted for the science, than the romance, of life! Notwithstanding these reservations the first novel was written by a woman—for Mme. de Lafayette preceded Richardson by half a century—and so, no doubt, will be the last.

Given the scope of a novel, I do not see how it is possible to show one superior to this portrait of a dullard. It is everything a novel can be and nothing it should not. It has all the qualities, and none of the faults, to be found in many a so-called masterpiece (by Dickens, Thackeray, Balzac, Maupassant, for instance); but there are few who would agree to this.

The "dullard" is the son of a country gentleman who had rural tastes and "a modern soul in spite of his name," and who, as was chronicled by an old governess in her memoirs of the family, "died—heroic example!—on a mowing- and binding-machine of the latest type in the presence of his routine-crusten tenants." An attempt to educate the boy after his father's death, and the family's desertion of the estate, in the customary civilised and citadine way, fails, and the young nobleman is put as a common agricultural labourer on a farm within sight of the *château* which would have been his inheritance had his mother not sold it over his head.

The account of his hard, lonely life, in a district which is the author's dearly-loved native land, gives her opportunities for description as full of flavour as is home-made bread, and such as have characterised previous of her books—notably "Marie, Fille-mère," the finest and most tragic piece of French fiction since "Madame Bovary" (I wonder how many people will start at this assertion?), and the equivalent in pathos to "Tess of the Durbervilles."

If you want to know what the Norman peasant is like—that race which has inherited from its Scandinavian ancestors a trait epitomised by Hamlet and expressed in their familiar locution, "peut-être bien que oui, peut-être bien non"—

"Il y a, dans cette phrase grossière, comme dans cette pensée profonde, un seul et même principe. De ce grand doute métaphysique procède en ligne directe cette défiance madrée, et, dans les deux, vit un pareil esprit de lutte abstraite." (The popular Norman phrase and Hamlet's famous "To be.") "N'y a-t-il pas là l'origine de toute la plaidoirie normande? Le pour y contredit le contre jusqu'aux extrêmes limites de la chicane, et ce sont deux avocats d'égale force dont on ne verra jamais finir le débat. De cette parole-çi à cette parole-là, on parcourt d'un bout à l'autre les degrés d'une unique échelle: en haut, l'effrayante casuistique d'un prince génial; en bas, la finaudeur d'un pauvre gars de ferme. Mais l'un et l'autre, à de telles distances, mettent toute leur ruse à fuir un semblable spectre, bien autrement terrible qu'un père assassiné—la décision à prendre."—

read Lucie Delarue-Mardrus: the Norman peasant—suspicious, grasping, harsh, but touchingly patriarchal, as witness that son—in all other circumstances rough and brutal—who, rather than contradict his father when not of his opinion, will leave the room, and who will lie by his side holding his hand through a whole night of sickness. If you think, with Heine, that art flows from wounds, then you will find art in Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, and scathing criticism of human pettiness—by one whom no nonsense can deceive, in whom there is no affectation, no pose, no mincing of words, one gifted with a sound, sensible, and, therefore, often humorous judgment—you will also find in her books.

But quotation will convey more than mere praise. This account of a peasant's meal gives you an idea of the book's "local colour":

"Nous ne nous rendons pas compte des mille raffinements qui nous entourent, nous autres de la vie bourgeoise. Ce diner! . . . Sur une table de bois blanc sans nappe ni toile cirée, parmi des convives en sabots

et dont les ongles rognés sont noirs, manger une soupe, puis des légumes, dans une même épaisse assiette, avec un couvert de plomb, un couteau de poche; retourner cette assiette au moment du fromage; ne voir ensuite apparaître aucun dessert, aucun fruit; boire le cidre dans un gros verre ou dans un bol; se sentir trop correct, trop droit, parfaitement étranger vis à vis des autres qui, les bras sur la table, le visage baissé vers la nourriture, mastiquent avec bruit sans parler ni se regarder, tandis que la ménagère et la servante, sans cesse, vont et viennent d'un air morne, que tout cela confère au repas grossière, utilitaire, triste allure!"

For emotion read this:

"Il sentit qu'il ne pourrait rien dire de plus, jamais rien dire de plus. Le grand drame de la timidité vivait en lui. Tout ce qu'il avait à raconter de lui-même: ses hauts, ses bas, ses désillusions, ses surprises, et cette ivresse de la solitude qu'il ressentait chaque jour plus violemment, tout cela, c'était trop compliqué pour être exprimé par son vocabulaire de gamin. Il faudrait un esprit fait, plein d'expérience et riche de mots subtils, pour dire ce qui se passe dans un âme d'enfant. Quand nous l'avons acquise, cette maturité, il n'est plus temps de nous en servir. Nous avons oublié notre enfance. Nous n'avons plus rien à raconter sur elle. Les enfants, ces grands passionnés, ces grands mystérieux, sont des muets. Leur vie intense est sans paroles."

"L'automne! Un tourment étrange agite l'adolescent. Il lui semble qu'il ne peut pas laisser perdre cette beauté, qu'il faut la retenir par quelque moyen—oui, la retenir, la fixer. Il ramasse des feuilles mortes, ardentes et belles comme des fleurs. Il les regarde, il les presse contre ses joues. Il ne sait que faire. Un jour, à bout d'émotion, il arrache un feuillet au petit carnet de poche où les commissions et les comptes sont inscrites. C'est une sorte de folie qui le prend. Avec son crayon, il griffonne nerveusement sur le bout de papier: 'Les feuilles. Les arbres. Jaune. Jaune . . . Rouge. Des flammes, des flammes aux arbres. Des langues de feu comme le Saint Esprit. Je ne sais pas . . .' Et c'est le besoin d'écrire qui vient de naître en lui, préparé par des mois de songe—l'instinct, irrésistible, comme une force naturelle, de faire des poèmes. . . . Que faire? Il veut offrir la beauté de l'automne à quelqu'un, à Dieu, peut-être; ou bien à lui-même. L'offrir . . . L'offrir . . . Et c'est une angoisse qui le brise, qui le tient éveillé toute la nuit, enfantin et lyrique, oublieux de tout, possédé."

"Georges Antoine pria Dieu de le délivrer de ses perplexités, de le rendre fort et noble. Tout son être aspirait vers quelque précision. Il n'en pouvait plus de se sentir vague comme les nuages, comme le vent, comme la mer."

This for *critique de mœurs*:

"Présentement, musiciens, peintres, écrivains, savants, hommes d'Etat, ne vivent que de parti-pris. Les uns disent 'école,' les autres 'système,' les autres 'nuances politiques,' et tous pensent, au fond, 'réclame.' Mesquinerie et mesquinerie. . . . Qu'est-ce qu'est devenu l'amour? Et sans chercher si haut, qu'est-ce qu'est devenue la simple et bonne bohème des prédécesseurs? Il n'y a même plus d'incompris aux longs cheveux. Il n'y a plus d'originaux. Dès vingt ans, on est tous corrects, mais plus ou moins ridicules. Tout est antipathique, sec comme une conversation de boursicotiers. . . . Cet été à Deauville, un demi-castor m'a dit ce mot admirable: 'La saison est vraiment intéressante cette année. Il y a tant de perles autour du cou des femmes qu'on croirait qu'on les donne.' Ainsi, l'on ne dit plus d'une femme qu'elle est jolie ou laide. On dit, 'Elle a des perles ou elle n'en a pas.'"

And, between the realist and the satirist peers the poet in the following lines:

Certains jours, je ne suis sur terre  
Qu'un sombre revenant,  
Qui par le pays cheminant,  
S'avance solitaire.



Je suis, de mes morts oubliés,  
L'âme toujours en peine,  
Tandis qu'ils sont, bras repliés,  
Dans la terre prochaine.

Je cherche, le long des chemins,  
Leur fugitive trace,  
Je sens en moi hurler ma race,  
Et je me tords les mains.

Je dis à tous les coins de route  
De mon terroir normand:  
"Ils ont passé par là, sans doute,  
Dans leur âge charmant."

Je dis: "O pères de mon père,  
Revivez-vous en moi?  
Et toi, le dernier dans la terre,  
Depuis si longtemps froid?"

"Dans mon souvenir je vous porte,  
Lourde paternité.  
Mon âme est parfois déjà morte  
De votre éternité.

Répondez lui qui hante seul  
Les bois, les prés, les eaux.  
Le lourd tombeau, comme une meule,  
A-t-il tué vos os?

"N'est-ce que de par mes vertèbres  
Que vous revivez tout,  
Et suis-je, sort des plus funèbres,  
Une tombe debout?"

This book is vivid because it vibrates with the personality of its author, for it is the artist's life which lends conviction to his work far more than the conscientious fidelity employed in the rendering of the subject. The narrative is but the form without the spirit. The life-current needed to animate it, to make it viable, has its source in, flows directly from, the narrator.

MURIEL CIOLKOWSKA.

## NORTHCLIFFE'S NICE PAPER AGAIN.

"Greatness of birth and fine correctness of manners came natural to him."

—*Times Literary Supplement.*

"He was sensitive, fastidious, unmarried, fragile of health, and nervous over such health as he might have enjoyed; in the affairs of his spiritual life a true lover of religion, pure and undefiled; in his home life, a most perfect and delightful brother and friend."

—*Times Literary Supplement* continuing.

"Then, too, the spread of the English language and literature are agencies of unification never before known."

—*Times Literary.*

"Take the relations with the Mother Country to the Colonies; we are apt to assume, as Sir Charles Lucas points out in his chapter upon 'Administration,' that there are two parties only concerned."

—*Times Literary.*

"Mr. Philip has not omitted to see Dalecarlia; he has inspected one of the iron districts."

—*Times Literary Supplement.*

"SWEDEN IN SUMMER."

—*Idem.*

"Across this scene of incipient terror waltzes, as airy as a sylph, the Austrian attaché."

—*The same.*

"Mr. Baring writes for the average man."

—*The same.*

"As he confesses in a dedicatory letter to Mr. H. G. Wells, the author was piqued at discovering by accident how very greatly Russia may be misunderstood in this country."

—*Times Literary Supplement.*

"There is something magnificent and fascinating in the very idea of a survey of the British Empire."

—*Same.*

"Leads us out of the little aims and the conventional considerations to the simple duty of following the call of what we know to be the truth."

—*Yet again.*

"N.B.—These Novels are among the successes of the Season, and are all in 2nd Editions, except "Sunrise Valley," which has reached, etc."

—*Times Literary Supplement* advt.

"This book embodies the results of an inquiry suggested by the Birmingham City Council into the 'causes of the deterioration in character and earning capacity' which has been observed to take place in a great number of the working boys of that city within two or three years from the time at which they leave the elementary school. The author obtained from the Juvenile Labour Exchange names and particulars, etc."

—*Times Literary Supplement.*

"This fiction ranges the world's oceans. Its men and women are of divers races, of four continents. Even its simplest seaman is something of a rare bird."

—*Times, of course.*

"In spite of all this never were sheep more rigorously divided from goats than were Greeks from Turks—as perhaps may be shown by Aunt Kalliros's attitude."

—*Times Literary Supplement.*

"But comedy, flourishing in a world which gravely doubts the necessity of laughter, has too often been held in an undeserved suspicion."

—*Same.*

"This is not biography. Well, then, is it science? *Expende Hannibalem*: weigh Galton, account for him: discover in him the Promethean *particulam undique decerptam*: go back to all the stocks and strands and bloods and blends that you can find: are you not landed, at last, in surmises and hypotheses, in probabilities and possibilities?"

—*Same.*

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\* \* \*

## THE ORIGIN OF DISTRUST OF PLEASURE.

To the Editor, THE EGOIST.

MADAM,

First allow me to apologise to Mr. Harpur for thinking that he attempted no explanation of the strange distrust which human beings have of some pleasures (that they do not distrust all is something for Mr. Harpur to explain). But that explanation is certainly one of the queerest I ever heard offered for anything.

To assert that "Chastity, generally speaking, is immoral because it is a refusal to increase the amount of pleasure in the world," is simply to beg the whole question. If licence in sexual relations would increase happiness—if that could be proved—everyone would agree that we need not restrain ourselves. But it is just this proof that I ask for and look for in vain from my opponents. Instead of trying to give it, they busy themselves striving to hide the deficiency with all sorts of rubbish about the relative desires of men and women; about the looseness of Old Testament men, and of Walpole and Marlborough; about Ormuzd and Ahriman.

If Mr. Harpur can prove his assertions about this last extraordinary pair, especially if he can prove that the only reason for chastity is the command of a stupid, cruel tyrant, whom human beings worship and obey because they worship power, and power is more easily exhibited in causing pain than happiness, then his contention may need a more detailed consideration. At present, I must say I cannot believe that Mr. Harpur is serious in his cock-and-bull yarn of the origin of the world and wickedness. When I am convinced that he is, and that he really cannot see its absurdities, I shall take the trouble to point out some of them to him.

R. R. W.

## "THE SPIDER'S WEB."

To the Editor, THE EGOIST.

MADAM,

I find that a recent issue of THE EGOIST contains a two-column accusation of my novel, "The Spider's Web." I am indicted on the charge that my "hero" does not interpret Dora Marsden's philosophy. I want now to plead to this indictment.

It is true that my "Luke Huber" was intended to agree with Miss Marsden in one—just one—phase of his final outlook upon life: that phase which is indicated in the preface by what is, I may add, a direct quotation, carefully so labelled, from an article by Miss Marsden herself in no less a paper than THE EGOIST. It is also true that nobody admires Miss Marsden's philosophy more than I do; that I am more nearly in accord with some of it than with some of "Huber's," and that I fancied that a novelist would not be held personally responsible for his characters' opinions. It seems, however, that I erred. I may, therefore, make but this reply to the charge that my hero does not interpret Miss Marsden's philosophy:

(1) I was unaware that the book had a hero;

(2) I was unaware that he was trying to interpret Miss Marsden's philosophy;

(3) I was unaware that a failure to interpret Miss Marsden's philosophy constituted an offence.

Ignorance of the law is no excuse; and innocence of intention is less. I plead guilty. Pray sentence me.

Scarborough.

REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN.

## "THE SPIDER'S WEB."

To the Editor, THE EGOIST.

MADAM,

On the first page of the preface to "The Spider's Web," Mr. Kauffman, speaking of his series of novels, "The House of Bondage," "The Sentence of Silence," "Running Sands," and "The Spider's Web," says:—"In what I had to say I believed burningly, as I still believe deeply, and the great thing with me was not to say it in the manner that most people would call Art, but to say it in the manner that would convert as many readers as possible to my way of thinking. I did not want to produce the effect of a work of Art; I wanted to produce conviction of truth." I think I may be excused for assuming that the views given to Huber were the author's own.

As to Mr. Kauffman's three replies I would say of

(1) That it is off the point. But if Huber is not a hero, will Mr. Kauffman show me a novel that has one?

(2) The review stated that a passage in the preface gave one the impression that Huber's views were supposedly identical with those of Miss Marsden.

(3) The offence lay, not in the failure to interpret, but in the claim that it did interpret, Miss Marsden's philosophy. Mr. Kauffman now says he was not trying ("was unaware he was trying") to interpret Miss Marsden's philosophy. I can merely repeat I got this impression.

But there was another indictment, viz., that the book, while setting out to produce conviction of truth, used means of a sort to defeat the purpose.

This, Madam, is my sentence on Mr. Kauffman: That he try another way of producing conviction of truth; that he try the rejected way; that he try to produce a work of Art.

H. S. W.

## EDITORIAL.

Letters, &c., intended for the Editor should be addressed to Oakley House, Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.

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